

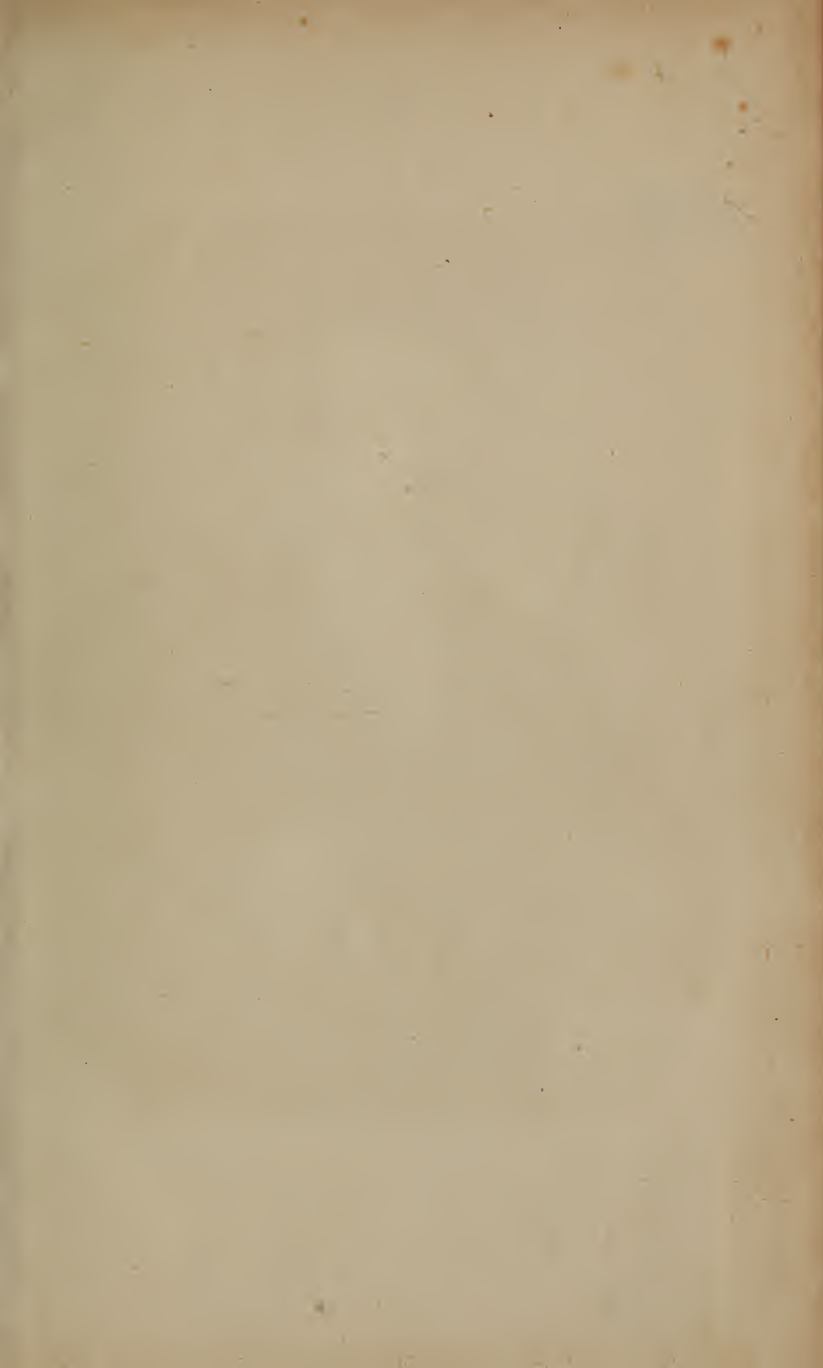


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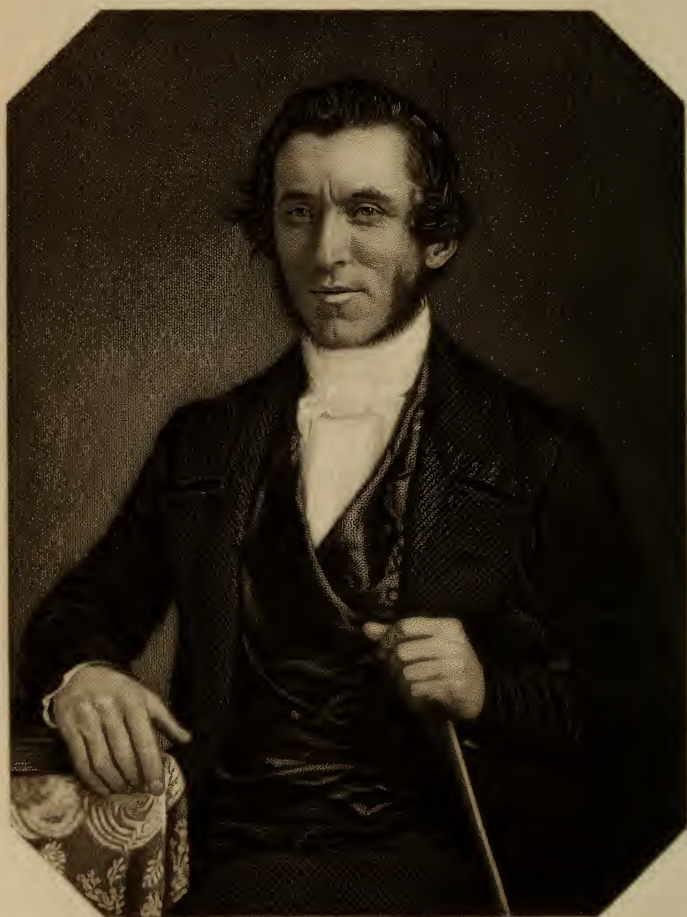






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Geo. B. Cheever.

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THE
HILL DIFFICULTY,
AND SOME
EXPERIENCES OF LIFE
IN
THE PLAINS OF EASE.

WITH OTHER MISCELLANIES.

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BY GEORGE B. CHEEVER, D.D.  
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NEW YORK:
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P R E F A C E .

IN a great forest, when Spring, Summer, and Autumn have renewed and finished their work, the leaves that fall off are never lost, but still have many uses. They may pass, though trodden under foot, into the life of brighter and fresher leaves, although they possess within them no power to reproduce a tree. Thus our thoughts, abandoned to the world, may do some good, provided a good nature is in them, and not the depravity and death of our moral nature, even though they may seem to have no great active power, except merely to weave a part of the common mould where mind is nourished. Still, if of a pure moral tendency, they may have a good share of influence in producing another fresh and vigorous foliage. On this ground, any right-minded Pilgrim through our world may be pardoned for the publication of a Book of Leaves.

If they are *only* leaves, so they be *pure* leaves, they can do no harm. If efficacious seeds are found within them and among them, although these be not of much note at present, yet possibly they may grow the better and more surely for not being noticed, in some minds on which the leaves have fallen.

We cannot *help* thinking ; and we are ever influencing *others* by our thoughts ; for our accustomed thoughts form

our character, and character is always active, for evil or for good. It is therefore a Christian duty to use every opportunity and occasion of circulating Christian thought. All such thought in our world occupies a space that might otherwise have been forestalled and filled with evil. If the work have aught of good in it, the Spirit of grace Divine can make it active and productive. May *that* be granted, and its publication will not be in vain.

NEW YORK, May 1, 1849.

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PART FIRST.

ALLEGORICAL AND IMAGINATIVE.



THE HILL DIFFICULTY:

WITH

THE JEWISH PILGRIM'S PROGRESS.

EVERY man has a Hill Difficulty to encounter in his Christian life. We all march upwards, and we have to climb. There are a thousand expedients to avoid the necessity of climbing, but they are very vain, and all the way there is conflict and trial. But in proportion to the patient and persevering zeal with which the soul maintains and endures the conflict, will be the ease with which afterwards it shall be borne forward in the victory. At the summit of the Hill there are winged cars, in which you step, and are carried swiftly and sweetly onwards. Such is the power of Christian habit. It is a Hill Difficulty at first, it is a winged car at last. "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint." "It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places."

The time of trial *must* be encountered. We will not say whether it lasts the life long, or precisely at what point the *habits* become *wings*; whether the cars at the top of the Hill are those which receive the soul at death, and cause it to glide through the air to the abodes of the blessed, or whether the movement begins this side the

grave, by the top of the Hill being reached before death, and the airy flight of the soul beginning even in the body, through the great celestial power of peace with God, and a love and joy unspeakable and full of glory. We think Paul stepped into those winged cars before he put off his mortal tabernacle. And every Christian *may* do so, for God has made it possible. But it depends greatly on the manner in which the Pilgrim travels up the Hill, in those parts of the pilgrimage where *climbing* is necessary. "My soul followeth hard after thee ; thy right hand upholdeth me." There must be labor, intense labor. "Striving according to his working, that worketh in me mightily." That was Paul's experience. "So run I, not as uncertainly, so fight I, not as one that beateth the air. I would that ye knew my conflict. Night and day praying exceedingly."

We say not, therefore, *when* the top of the hill is reached, or *may be* reached, but this we do say, that the Hill Difficulty is long, and the climbing of it is a great discipline for every soul. This also we say, that Christian habit, though difficult in the formation and establishment, turns into wings, and whereas at first the soul had to carry its habits forward with great difficulty and labor, at the last habit carries the soul forward.

I had a sight of this Hill Difficulty lately, as in a trance, in which I looked, and saw a great variety of characters laboring up. There was a bright light at the summit, and a vast, dark, wild-looking plain at the base ; but so far as sight was concerned, the Hill seemed to me to constitute the whole of the Christian life ; for the top of the Hill, and the winged cars in waiting, were out of sight ordinarily, and only now and then I seemed to be raised where I could see them floating in light. But I watched with exceeding great interest the progress of the various multitude. Some were going up, some were going back. Some set out with great apparent zeal at first, but soon became

tired, and turned away disgusted with the labor. I thought of the text, that the hypocrite will not always call upon God, and also of the text, "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved;" and also of that, "Ye have need of patience, and shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul hath no pleasure in him."

Some seemed to take the Hill very hard, others more leisurely. Some disencumbered themselves of everything but what was absolutely necessary to a becoming appearance as Pilgrims, saying among themselves, We brought nothing into the world, and it is certain that we can carry nothing out; others took an immense quantity of luggage, and various unnecessary burdens along with them. I thought of the text, "Laying aside every weight, and the sin that doth so easily beset us, let us run with patience the race that is set before us." Some laid in a great stock of provisions, and even of fresh water, for the top of the Hill, fearful that by and by they might find themselves destitute of everything to eat and drink; others seemed to have little or no anxiety about the future, but just to get forward. I thought of the text, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," and also of our Lord's prayer, "Give us, *day by day*, our daily bread." And I thought of the text, "He shall drink of the brook by the way;" for there was a stream of living water running down the Hill, by the way-side, from top to bottom, and there was no need of any one suffering from thirst, whose soul thirsted after God.

Some of the Pilgrims were in plain russet garb—travel-stained and dusty, yet strong and useful garments, easily brushed, and fitted for a path over craggy mountains. There were others in elegant and costly dresses, with gold and pearls, and brodered array, which it cost a great deal of time and care to keep in the least order, and which greatly interfered with the progress of the wearers. Indeed, to see them thus arrayed for so laborious a pilgrimage

seemed quite ridiculous. I thought of Peter's warning about the hidden man of the heart, and the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and I remembered also that beautiful remark of good Archbishop Leighton, that we must keep our loins girt up, and cannot wear our flowing robes here in our pilgrimage, for they will be dragged in the mire, or perhaps will entangle our feet in climbing; but that when we get to heaven we can wear our long flowing robes without danger of defilement, for the streets of that city are pure gold.

It may seem strange, but it is no less true, that there were some who made great provision for *amusements* by the way, thinking that it would be a dreary life if they had nothing to do but climbing. Sometimes they went so far as to club together, and hire companies of musicians, who could pitch a tent here and there, where a bit of table-land, with green grass, might be found among the crags of the Hill, as often perhaps as every Saturday night, and so enliven the pilgrimage. Out of these materials they contrived to make up a kind of Christian Opera, which was thought to be good for low spirits. And besides this, they had various Tabernacular concerts, imitated from the plains below, and public readings of Shakspeare. It was said to be as great a shame that the devil should keep all the *amusements* of life for *his* purposes in the plains, as that he should keep all the best *music* to himself, as he always had done. It was argued also, that if some of the same fun which they had in the plains were not carried up the Hill, and kept in exercise there, (only consecrated, of course,) people fond of the gayeties of life, and especially children, could not be induced to set out from the plains below, to go up the Hill Difficulty. It was argued also, that the Hill had been long enough, and too long, occupied only with sour-faced Puritans, with the whites of their eyes turned up, (see Macaulay's History of England) and speaking through their noses, and that it was high time there should be a

sweeter, more accommodating and genteel kind of piety. Some thought that these things could better be managed by all for themselves, without need of any regulations, and that they might very well have dancing schools for the children, and French conversations to keep up their accomplishments. One lady remarked that for her part, she always, in travelling, took her Bible and Byron, and did not need anything else. There were many discussions about these things, and various opinions.

For my part, I thought of Paul's instructions, "See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil: speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." And I thought of the text in James, which some regarded as rather quaint, "Is any among you afflicted? let him pray. Is any merry? let him sing psalms." And I could not help thinking also of Peter, "Be sober, be vigilant: And if ye call on the Father, pass the time of your sojourning in fear." I thought also of the experience of Solomon, who sought upon a time to go up this same Hill Difficulty with men-singers and women-singers, and the delights of the sons of men, musical instruments, and that of all sorts; and who, moreover, took up great possessions of great and small cattle into the Hill, and builded him houses, and planted him vineyards, and made him gardens and orchards. But he found out, after all, that that was not the way, but that all was vanity and vexation of spirit. And I heard him say himself, that a single handful is better with quietness, than both hands full with vexation of spirit. Also I heard him say, that the laughter of the fool is as the crackling of thorns under a pot, and that it is better to hear the rebuke of the wise, than the song of fools. Also he said, that the house of mirth was the fool's heart's tavern; and that, on the whole, sorrow was better than laughter.

I am now to speak of a strange thing. There were

here and there, at the sides of the way up the Hill, Patent Offices, where machines had been invented to take Pilgrims up without climbing ; not for the sick and feeble, the helpless and aged merely, but for all, without respect to class, character, or condition. There was particularly such an Office, much frequented, of late times especially, at the junction between the plains and the Hill Difficulty, at the very entrance upon the hill. There had been constructed there a great balloon, to avoid climbing, named *Baptismal Regeneration*, in which, by an ingenious chemical use of a little font of water, a very subtle light gas was manufactured to fill the balloon ; and then the adventurers in it, having been made to inhale the same gas, stepped into a car to which the balloon was attached, and were carried along quite swiftly at the start, half-floating, half-dragging. These adventurers all lost their lives in the end, unless they got out of the car, and took to the real pilgrimage, without the patent ; for, at a certain point in the journey there was a strong wind, that took the balloon out of its intended course, and the cars were dashed in pieces. But notwithstanding this, the patentees insisted on this being the only way of salvation. They, and they only, it was said, had received the patent, and been appointed for its sole management by commission from the apostles. It was a dreadful hallucination ; the more so, because it was adopted beforehand by a great many people in the plains, who felt very sure that they need give themselves no anxiety about getting up the Hill, as the balloon was always ready, and therefore, start whenever they might, there was no fear for them, nor any need of hurrying.

Hard by this Office, and in league with the balloon system, there was another, kept by that son of Abraham who was by a bond-woman, born after the flesh ; he kept charge of Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. He persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, and in time past had thrown a great bar across the

way of the pilgrims, making it a State-turnpike instead of a free road, and letting none pass but such as would pay tribute, and swear themselves subjects of the son of Hagar, and of Jerusalem in bondage. But the Lord of the Hill ordered the bar to be taken down, and all hindrances to be removed out of the way, declaring that all who were baptized into Christ had put on Christ, and were one in Christ Jesus, while those who had not this true baptism by his Spirit in their hearts, were none the better for the external *rite* of baptism. For he said that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availed anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature, and that the sinner could not be justified by anything but faith. Moreover, he said that the son of the bondwoman should not be heir with the son of the free woman. And he commanded all the Pilgrims to stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ had made them free, and not to be entangled again in the yoke of bondage.

The people of the plains sometimes went to law about these balloons, with another great party, that claimed the honor of having invented them long before, and of having the only right to use them. It was said that they belonged in the first place to the Pope of Rome, and that he having charged too high for the use of them, this second party had pirated the invention, and ever since the time of Luther, had combined with several States to put it at a lower rate, and for a long time likewise, made almost everybody come into it. Now, however, the combination between Church and State being much broken up, people were not compelled to employ the balloons as formerly, and great multitudes went up the Hill without them, well knowing how dangerous it was to trust in them. Moreover, of those who had been in the habit of manufacturing and of patronizing the pirated invention, there were not a few returning to the old original balloon of the Pope, thinking themselves safer, on the whole, in that, and determining henceforward, if they must use either, to abide by the real Simon Pure.

It was said that Simon Peter himself had given it with his own hands to the Pope, and a great many Tracts for the Times were written to prepare men's minds for a return to the general use of it. After the year 1848, some said that if it were found necessary, Peter would undoubtedly give the Pope a second balloon to carry him back from Gaieta to Rome, and keep him suspended, untouched and intangible, in his temporal sovereignty.

There was another patent higher up the Hill Difficulty than this, called *Perfection*; where the souls of the pilgrims that were willing to undergo the operation, were fitted, or appeared to be fitted, with wings, after having been made to drink of a very penetrating and delicious cordial, entitled self-esteem. This cordial was made up, in part, out of the elements of past experience, kept till they were rotten; after which, like the process of malt liquor, made out of pure grain, the cordial being distilled, got into the head and heart, and prepared its subjects for the most venturesome and desperate expedients with those artificial wings. Men could go with them to the edge of steep precipices, where they sometimes threw themselves off, and were dashed in pieces, or, in endeavoring to fly, stumbled and fell. Sometimes the fall broke off their wings without killing them, and then, after great labor and pain, they found their way back again into the right road upon the Hill, where, without any more patent wings, they went anxiously and sadly all their days. But it was a very dangerous delusion, and some who were carried away by it, forsook the Hill Difficulty altogether, and threw off all law, saying that they were not under law but under grace; and so they set up in the wilderness an establishment something like the system of Communism or Fourierism, where they had all things common except the Water of Life, which was not to be had among them.

Of those who were climbing up the Hill in the right way, there was a great variety of persons and of characters.

Some moved confident and light-hearted, some went desponding and much burdened. Some went at a very snail's pace, some more swiftly, some seemed for a long while to be standing still. Some few shot upward with an earnestness and vigor most surprising and animating to look at. And what seemed a little strange, the more heart and strength were put into the work of climbing, the less the fatigue appeared to be felt. Indeed, the air grew more bracing and clearer, the farther they went up, and the prospect everywhere began to be glorious. I thought of our Lord's words, "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." And sometimes there seemed to be a mist of light in the clouds above the Hill, in which, when the climbers at a hard part of the pilgrimage looked steadily up, the words of that great promise were seen distinctly shining, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." In very clear weather these glittering words could be seen from the top to the bottom of the Hill, and they were like a crown of blazing jewels, set upon a city battlement, and the sight of them sometimes prevented Pilgrims, even at the plains, from getting into the patent balloon cars instead of climbing, and sent them on, with a great impulse, rejoicing even in the discipline of trial, and struggling up the Hill.

There were steady climbers, and there were inconstant, fitful ones. There were those of strong faith, who girded up the loins of their minds, and hoped to the end, and there were those who were constantly doubting they should never get to the top of the Hill. Some would go like the wind for a few days or hours, seeming as though they would outstrip all competitors. Then they would stop by the way-side to gather some rock-crystals, or would engage in some disquisition about wings, and sometimes were tempted to step into the patent office, and

lost much time in this way and that, instead of climbing. Others seemed to be continually thinking of their *comfort* in climbing, having some way got the notion that the proof of their progress lay in the sensible delight which they experienced in the work. This was a great injury both to their advancement and happiness. They sometimes envied those patent wings, though they did not dare really to try them. I thought of David, when *he* was climbing, and was forced to come down upon his hands and knees, with the way so dark, moreover, that he could see no light ; and I thought if *he* had been in the habit of making his hope and his evidence to depend upon his comfort, he would twenty times have given up in utter despair. But he cried unto God in the day of his trouble, and climbed on, even when his soul refused to be comforted. He was still thinking of the next step. "From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee when my heart is overwhelmed ; lead me to the rock that is higher than I." Sometimes David himself said, "O, that I had wings like a dove !" But he never applied at the Patent Office. And when he really *had* wings, and was singing like a lark because of what God had done for him, he said he was a poor and needy sinner, whose only hope was that the Lord was thinking upon him. Blessed is the man that maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not such as turn aside to lies. Those that, like David, thirsted after God, rather than for comfort, and preferred a clean heart before a merry one, found comfort enough without thinking of it. I observed that when, according to David's experience, their souls in climbing labored hard after God, then they had also David's assurance of the right hand of God upholding them.

The steady climbers of course made the surest progress. They went straight onward, and if a very rough place came in their way, such was the habitual directness and intensity of their zeal, such their *habit* of application to the

pilgrimage, that almost before they had time to think whether there might be an easier way, they found themselves entered upon the difficult, rough passage, without attempting to go round it. But these steady climbers had for their motto, "I will go in the strength of the Lord God ; I will make mention of thy righteousness, even of thine only." And also this : " I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me." Their combined intensity and perseverance was the effect, under God's grace, of continued, strong, steady, Christian habit. It was like the impulse of a swift skater, the application of whose muscular energy has given him such power of impetus, that if he should attempt to stand still, the very habit of motion will carry him swiftly forward. These steady climbers had thus gained the power of a continued impulse, without relying on it. Their whole reliance was on Christ. " Without me, ye can do nothing."

They made much use, unceasing use, of prayer. Prayer and God's Word, indeed, kept up a fire within them, that seemed to scorn the cold, the rain, the fatigue, without them. And it was observed, that while these steady climbers had great enjoyment by the way, they did not stop to ponder upon it, to luxuriate over it, as it were, but still pressed upward, always eager to advance. I thought of Paul's relation of some passages in the history of his own soul : " I count not myself to have attained or to have become perfect ; but this one thing I do, forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching on after those that are before, I press towards the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." Indeed, according to the experience of another great old climber, who once slept in the Arbor on the Hill, in consequence of very delight in pondering over his joy, and who for a season lost his roll in consequence of that sleep, it was observed that those who, even in a very clear frame of mind, began to sit down and delight themselves with reading their roll,

soon grew confused again, and lost their place in it, or fell asleep and mislaid it. It was not by pondering their own experience, and delighting in that, but by pondering God's word, and delighting themselves in God, that they found the desire of their hearts, and went safely onwards. "THOU wilt light my candle," says David: "the Lord my God will enlighten my darkness. 'Thou wilt show me the path of life: in *thy* light shall we see light."

Moreover, the best climbers did not compare themselves with one another's progresses, but measured the Hill, and thought how far still they were from the top of it. On the other hand, a great many seemed to think that if they did but go as fast as their neighbors, they were in very good case, and had no occasion for anxiety. This evil was the source of a very slow advancement with many, who never, in consequence of this very thing, got to the top of the Hill, to the winged cars, as long as they lived, but were all their life-time subject to bondage.

In the variety of character among the true Pilgrims, you might distinguish several prevailing forms, singularly separate and distinct, the work of particular individual undercurrents of temperament and habit, modifying the direct ideally perfect result of the workings of that One and the self-same Spirit, who divideth to every man severally as he will. There were the *brooding* Pilgrims, bent down, and looking into self, sometimes so intent on this inspection, so absorbed in it, that they could see nothing else, not even the path before them, nor seemed to notice any of their fellows; and in consequence of this brooding, they often *stumbled* up the Hill rather than climbed, but still more frequently thought they were advancing, while they were only standing still and groaning. They needed to look out of self up to the top of the Hill and the Lord of the Hill. And I observed that in this desperate brooding over self, instead of the consequence being a sympathy with others' distresses, they seemed to think only of their

own, and fell into the imagination that the great weight and care of their own sins and sorrows unfitted them for any active part in helping others, or excused them from it; which was a great mistake. I heard of one great Pilgrim, who once for a season was in danger of this habit, but afterwards by the grace of Christ, and by looking to Christ, got out of it, who exclaimed in a voice loud enough to be heard all the way down the Hill, *No good ever comes of brooding!*

There were also the *legal* Pilgrims, looking to *duties* rather than Christ, as the others did to *frames* rather than Christ. The tendency of this was to injure, if not to spoil both their duties and their frames—both their works and their faith; and in truth their ideas of faith were very much clouded and darkened, and their souls were kept in bondage. For they could not satisfy conscience, and yet they looked very much to that for justification and comfort; but this they could not find, without casting all on Christ daily, and having him and his love as the spring and strength of duty, and receiving his pardon daily, as guilty and lost, but believing, trusting, loving, and obeying out of love. The havoc made with the comfort and fervor of the Pilgrims by this want of faith and love, and this legal resort to forms of duty as a kind of purchase-money, was very sad. They had a sort of measuring rod of Moses, by which they endeavored to graduate their steps and gauge their progress, instead of walking by the Law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus. The Lord of the Hill had been at great pains to keep them from this evil, and had taught very clearly the difference between children and slaves, and had told them that in Christ they were *children*, and must walk in *love*, as *dear* children. “Ye have not,” said he, “received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but ye have received the Spirit of Adoption, whereby ye cry Abba, Father.”

It was evident that in many cases this difficulty grew

out of the wrong mould in which their views and habits had been run by defective human teaching. One of the Pilgrims themselves, who had had much to do in leading souls to Christ, once told me, of his own accord, that it often seemed to him, as if he, and many other ministers of the gospel, had too much imitated the example of Moses, who led his father Jethro's flock to *the back side of the desert* and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb. But he said it was a cruelty to detain the flock of our Saviour in the dreary wilderness, before the thundering, quaking mountain. We are not come to the mount that might be touched, to blackness, and darkness and tempest; but we are come to Mount Zion, to the City of the living God, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and Church of the first-born, to God the Judge of all, to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel. Moses, said he, is dead, and the Lord has buried him, and no man knows of his sepulchre to this day. Let us not be his disciples, as the Jews foolishly boasted that they were, but rather be the disciples of our blessed Lord, whom God raised from the dead, and placed at his own right hand in heavenly places, as Head over all things to the Church.

There were also the *sympathizing* Pilgrims, a very beautiful type of character, who, whatever might be the difficulties they had to encounter in the way, took always a deep interest in those struggling around them. If a fellow-Pilgrim fell down, they were at his side in a moment. You could never hear them speaking evil of any man, and they had such a loving charitable judgment, (so long as they did not really *know* evil of any man) that it was sweet to see them. There was a great deal of scandal and gossip on the Hill, among some, whom Paul in the Directory had described as "working not at all, but busybodies, idle, and tattlers, and speaking things which they

ought not." These would often get together and make terrible work with other's reputations, having a curious kind of Dorcas' societies for tearing clothes, not for making or mending them; and yet with all this, they were very severe upon the concerts and other things which some other of the Pilgrims patronized. The truly charitable Pilgrims did their best to put a stop to all scandal, and if their example had been followed, there would have been no such thing. They prayed much for all that were upon the Hill, and helped others to grow in grace, and their tenderness to the poor and feeble was lovely to behold, and also to those who had gone astray. They might sometimes be heard, while climbing the Hill, repeating to themselves the passage, "Considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted." They also made much of Paul's injunction, "to lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees; and make straight paths for your feet, lest that which is lame be turned out of the way; but let it rather be healed." It was very evident that the more they were interested in others, the happier they were in themselves; and though they took so much time for these acts of kindness and love in helping others to climb, yet they seemed themselves to make an easier and more rapid progress upward than those did who seemed to be thinking solely of their own climbing and comfort. Those who forgot self, found self by the way, but those who sought it lost it.

There were also the singing and rejoicing Pilgrims; but these too would sometimes be brooding, and sometimes sympathizing; those that were *always* light-hearted were apt to be very superficial; and indeed, unless they had sometimes gone down into the depths of a gloomy experience themselves, they could not tell what to make of it in others. But when the Pilgrims were in those depths, it was a pretty hard thing to sing; the utmost they could do sometimes, was to groan and pray. They had many sweet melodies, which, when I heard, I wondered that any

who had been taught of God with a heart-relish for those celestial songs and harmonies, should ever experience such an "itching ear," as some among them did, for the more fashionable music of the plains below. Here and there from out the craggy passes of the Hill, you could sometimes hear strains like the following from a little band of Pilgrims, all singing :

On wings of faith ascending, we see the land of light,
And feel our sorrows ending, in infinite delight.
'Tis true we are but strangers, and pilgrims here below,
And countless snares and dangers surround the path we go.
Though painful and distressing, yet there 's a rest above,
And onward still we 're pressing, to reach that land of love.

Sometimes one choir of Pilgrims would stand and sing as follows :

Long nights and darkness dwell below,
With scarce a twinkling ray,
But the bright world to which we go
Is everlasting day.
Our journey is a thorny maze,
But we march upward still,
Forget these troubles of the ways,
And reach at Zion's Hill.

Then another choir would take up the strain, higher up above, answering and echoing :

See the kind angels at the gates
Inviting us to come !
There Jesus, the Forerunner, waits,
To welcome travellers home.
There on a green and flowery mount
Our weary souls shall sit
And with transporting joys recount
The labors of our feet.

Then both choirs together would break out in chorus with the close of the melody :

Eternal glory to the King
Who brought us safely through !
Our tongues shall never cease to sing
— And endless praise renew.

The effect was enchanting, sometimes, of a bright still night, to hear these melodies echoing from point to point, among the windings of the way ; and it seemed as if you could see the wings of listening angels in the moonlight.

I observed that there was great need of watchfulness in going up the Hill, because there were so many ways that wound round it, instead of going straight up, as did the King's highway ; and these by-ways went off sometimes so gradually from the straight way, that a careless soul might easily be decoyed into them without being at first aware. There was one path especially, that was exceedingly deceitful and dangerous, which was called Spiritual Pride by those who knew its character, though that was not the name given to it generally, which, however, was of such a nature, that the fastest climbers, when they fell to thinking complacently about their progress, instead of looking and pressing on above, were most in danger of being turned aside in it. There was great need of watchfulness, to preserve humility, and have the soul kept from many snares that were laid for the feet of the unwary.

There was another corresponding by-path, but quite on the other side of the way, called Sacred Formalism, a road that wound like a corkscrew, with chapels every few steps, and things called altars between, and crosses at every corner, and in fine, so many sensible objects, and prescribed devotions, that the attention of the souls of the Pilgrims who ran into that way was quite turned from that which is within to that which is without. They looked away from the end of the Hill, and from their progress upwards, to this corkscrew of things done daily, in which many rested, just as if it supplied the place of salvation, or as if salvation consisted in it. When this was the case, those who were thus deluded were kept all their life going round and round, always working, but never getting a step upwards, and yet always imagining themselves, if not at the

very top of the hill, yet close upon it, and in the only sure way to reach it. This was a very terrible delusion.

I observed that the only safe way, the only security against being turned aside into any of these by-paths, was in a watchful keeping as near as possible to the very middle of the King's highway. It was said that the turning away of the simple should slay them, but that God would instruct and teach in his own way, and guide with his own eye those who trusted in him, and that those whom God taught the way of his statutes, would keep it unto the end. It was said for the encouragement of the Pilgrims that God was good and upright, and therefore would certainly teach sinners in the way, that he would guide the meek in their judgment, and teach the meek his way, and that all the paths of the Lord were mercy and truth to such as kept his commandments and his testimonies. So for this purpose a great many good prayers were put into their lips, prayers that came from David's heart by the guidance of God's Spirit when he was on the Hill and exposed to danger; prayers and promises together, as in the 25th Psalm, and that great prayer in the 139th. "Search me O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." The Pilgrims were made to know, that if there were any wicked way *in them*, it was not possible they should go on straight in God's everlasting way; so daily they must bring their hearts and ways to God to be corrected, and by him must be kept in the right way.

For this there were great instructions given, and a perfect map was furnished to all who desired it, before setting out, in which all the dangers of the way were put down, as well as an exact and accurate line of the true way, and many of the experiences which the Pilgrims in it would be sure to encounter. There were many notes from David's experience, in regard to this map, and also respecting the

snares, gins, and nets, that would be hidden, set, and spread by the wayside for the unwary. One of David's notes and prayers together was as follows: "Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the destroyer. Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." The Pilgrims were told to keep these instructions and this map in the very middle of their hearts, and not to let them depart from their eyes; just as we say of a very precious thing lent to another, Don't let it go out of your sight at all, for a moment. It was added to this as follows: "Let thine eyes look straight on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the paths of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left; remove thy foot from evil. My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him."

There was another by-way, which one would not have expected to find running off from the Hill, the by-way of the strange woman. It was sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, and therefore the more dangerous, especially in the twilight, in the evening, and in the black and dark night. Her ways had been described in the map before spoken of, as *moveable* ways, made such by the woman, that men might not know them, lest they should ponder the path of life. This danger had therefore been put down in the map more clearly than most others; and it was said concerning that same strange woman—"Remove thy way *far* from her, and come not nigh the door of her house. Her feet go down to death, her steps take hold on hell." The moveableness and swiftness of this way of sin and danger, and its temptations coming sometimes so unexpectedly, was one cause of King David himself being once snared by it, to his own dreadful guilt, distress, and almost ruin. He would have been destroyed by it, but for the wonderful mercy of God, who sent after him, and brought him back. Every Pilgrim on the Hill knew what

had happened to David, and also to Solomon after him ; so that, while there was more warning on the Hill against this evil than when David and Solomon were climbing up, there was also less excuse for those who gave way to it, for they did it against great light and knowledge. And there was, moreover, an inscription always flaming out in the sight of those who by God's grace had preserved their souls in much prayer and watchfulness, when they came near those places of danger ; a very solemn, awful, and forbidding inscription, in letters of such fiery, angry flame, and yet mournful withal, that it made the blood curdle : "He knoweth not that THE DEAD ARE THERE, and that HER GUESTS ARE IN THE DEPTHS OF HELL."

All these by-ways ran in the enemy's country, a country full of all manner of evils and deaths. The paths that struck off into it were strewn with the skeletons of Pilgrims who had fallen there, and remained unburied. For it was well known as one of the laws of the Lord of the Hill, that "the man that wandereth out of the way of understanding shall remain in the congregation of the dead." And the congregation of unburied dead in the enemy's country was a terrible thing to witness. It had been said also, that there was no hope for those who left the paths of uprightness to walk in the way of darkness, whose ways are crooked, and they froward in their paths. In connection with this, the pilgrims were cautioned against leaning to their own understanding, and were told that the way of the wicked is as darkness, and that they know not at what they stumble. To all this it was added with great emphasis that "*there is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death.*"

A good reason for these great and solemn warnings, especially the last, and a deep meaning in them, could be seen in the course of some who turned out of the way at those goings off, by spiritual pride and imaginary perfection.

It had been generally supposed that the house of that strange woman, whose house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death, was almost only in the plains below. But it was found that one of her "moveable" dwellings was also in those by-paths going off from the Hill, full of pretensions to holiness, to call passengers who go right on their ways. There was a pretence to a holiness so great and marvellous, that it released men entirely from the law of God, and set them free from all obligations, and *that*, they said, was the freedom of faith. Many unstable souls were beguiled by the accursed practices of these teachers, and went into the house of the moveable woman. But the pilgrims could turn to their maps, and find this horrible reef of sin and danger, laid down most distinctly, in Peter, with the very beginnings of it in those boastful pretences of great holiness and freedom. "For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure, through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error. While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

Some of the by-ways of this Hill were much frequented by demons. They staid, it is true, mostly in the plains below, where they electioneered for the owners of the balloons, when they could not prevent people from starting, at some rate, on the journey; but still they came sometimes, in great swarms, higher up, and set upon the passengers up the Hill, for the purpose of sifting them, and

finding weak spots where they might strike a dart through them. Peter, in his way up the Hill, encountered such an assault more than once, and it proved a perilous place in his pilgrimage ; but our blessed Lord prayed for him, and so his faith was not suffered utterly to fail. Job, it was well known, had terrible and repeated encounters of this kind, in the hardest part of his progress up the Hill, and Paul once and again was hindered in his way by Satan, and spoke from experience when he exhorted all Pilgrims to put on the whole armor of God, that they might be able to stand against all the wiles of the devil, and especially to take the shield of faith for quenching the fiery darts of the Wicked One. These darts the Adversary would sometimes shoot, suddenly and unexpectedly, from behind the crags that outjuttred in some places over the way, and Pilgrims who walked carelessly received many a severe wound and injury.

Now, when I had beheld all these things, and for the present was satisfied with looking, I bethought me that I would examine those Songs of Degrees, or goings up, in the Psalms of David, for I thought it probable he might have composed them on purpose for the pilgrimage up this very Hill. There are fifteen of them, and I found in some of them very great internal marks of the Hill Difficulty. In the first, the Pilgrim seems to be just setting out, or thinking of setting out from the plains. "Wo is me, that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar!"

In the second, he has a clear view of the Hill, and encourages himself greatly with God's promises in setting out. "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills. My help cometh from the Lord. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved. The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in forever."

In the third, he rejoices in being in the way up the Hill, and is assured that he shall see Jerusalem, and stand within the gates of the great city.

In the fourth, he begins to meet with some of the difficulties, but lifts up his soul to God, and waits upon him for mercy and deliverance.

In the fifth he has evidently had some wonderful escapes from the dangers of the way, and blesses God for his deliverance.

In the sixth he has seen the fate of some that turn aside, and contrasts it with the happiness of those who trust in the Lord, and cannot be removed, but are as Mount Zion, which abideth forever. "As for such as turn aside into their crooked ways, the Lord shall lead them forth with the workers of iniquity, but peace shall be upon Israel."

In the seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth, there are various and beautiful experiences, some of them applicable especially to whole households on pilgrimage.

In the eleventh there is a great and precious spiritual experience, common to all true Pilgrims up the Hill.

In the twelfth the singer seems to be very near the top, and as quiet as a weaned child. And that was David's *quietism*.

In the thirteenth he has great foretastes and prophecies of the glorious rest of God forever.

In the fourteenth he steps into the winged cars with a company of fellow-pilgrims, and enjoys the sweetness of the Christian alliance, the unity of love.

In the sixteenth he praises God, and exhorts to the observance of night, as well as day-worship in the sanctuary, and blesses all the servants of the Lord.

The Jewish Rabbi, Kimchi, says that there were fifteen steps by which the priests ascended into the temple, and on each of these steps they sang one of these psalms. This was all the approximation that many of them ever made towards the experience of a Pilgrim's Progress. Then I thought that those who now go back to Judaism, and set up again a Jewish priesthood and a temple-worship in the place of Christ's own ministry of the New Dispensa-

tion, are likely never to know anything more of the Pilgrim's Progress than those fifteen stone steps. For he only is a true descendant of faithful Abraham who is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God. The Galatians, in the time of Paul, were going up those stone steps; though they began in the spirit, they went about to be made perfect in the flesh; they removed from the grace of Christ into another gospel of forms and ordinances, and of weak and beggarly elements, whereunto they desired to be in bondage. But Paul declared that in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availed anything, nor uncircumcision, but faith which worketh by love. He said that nothing would be of the least avail without a new creature,—the entire regeneration of the soul in Christ. That was the true Pilgrim's progress;—it was David's Psalms in the heart, and not on the fifteen stone steps of the temple.

THE TWO WAYS AND THE TWO ENDS.

A LIFE ALLEGORY.

METHOUGHT I was writing upon the mystery of the judgment. The books seemed as if open before me, and my pen could almost transcribe their dread immutable records. But I was looking at the future through the unerring telescope of the past; through the mighty fact, that all of life is to be reproduced in the day of judgment, and then and there to constitute the material and ground of an endless and immutable decision. In this connection there came to my mind the remark of an eminent man of God, Mr. Cecil, that the way of every man is declarative of the end of that man. A prayerful man, for example, I said, will have a prayerful end. A prayerful man, a man whose life has been ordered by prayer, and filled with the habit of prayer, will be prayerful in sickness, and prayerful in death. He will possess a spirit of prayer, even when all the faculties of body and of mind seem departing. The habit of his life will assert its power, and come out triumphant in death, and there will be communion of the soul with the Lord Jesus Christ, even when all possibility of communing with anything of earth has departed.

I remarked that a man's whole way through life, religious or irreligious, is developed at his end. Our life is as a book, in the leaves of which are written, for the most part, as with invisible ink, the processes of our real existence, the goings on of our inward, hidden being, the movements of real,

undissembled, absolute character and motive. Our appearance in the eye of men, our actions with the world, our life, which the world notices, occupies but little of the writing in this book. By far the greater part is taken up with the processes of a life, which men do not, and cannot see, which God only sees fully and clearly, and of which we ourselves seldom read more than a page at a time.

I had written thus far, and was proceeding, on the same train of thought, to show that every development of our nature and habits, every thought, wish, plan, feeling, and action of life, was a part of our way *through* life, prophesying its end, and destined to come out fully, as constituting our character and determining our retribution at the judgment. I was passing on thus in my contemplations, when suddenly an invisible influence changed the direction of my thoughts, just as if an angel should stand at the brake of a railroad, where two trains intersect, and by an unseen movement of the lever should turn the cars from one direction to another, the passengers knowing nothing of it. Just so, by a single text of Scripture, my train of thought was turned. Whether it were an angel, ministering, that brought me the passage, or what unseen association, linking it with Mr. Cecil's remark, I know not; but under the guidance of my invisible conductor I passed on. The text was from Proverbs, the fifteenth chapter, twenty-fourth verse:—"The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath."

Here, said my invisible conductor, is your subject. Here is where Mr. Cecil's remark comes from God. All mankind are travelling in one of these two ways, and the way of each man shows plainly what his end will be. There is a way above and a way beneath. The way above is spiritual, prayerful, a way of faith and prayer. The way beneath is earthly, worldly, prayerless, a way of unbelief and insensibility, and carelessness. The way above is the way of a few; the way beneath is the way of a

multitude. The way above leads above, leads to Heaven ; the way beneath leads beneath, leads down to hell. The way above is the way of the wise ; the way beneath is the way of fools.

Now, said my invisible conductor, waving this text before me, as a kind of fiery banner, let us leave your metaphysics, and your tracing of the involutions of men's thoughts, and let us follow their ways, these two ways, there being no other but these two, out of this world into the eternal world ; the way above and the way beneath, the way to heaven and the way to hell. For this is just that which our Saviour said as plainly in other words, Enter ye in at the strait gate ; for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat. Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.

We will take up these two ways, said my conductor, in a figure, or allegorical description, where they pass into two bridges, across the probationary tide of our existence. If you wish to interrupt me in the narrative with questions, you can do it ; but I shall show you very plainly the course of this world, and the meaning of the way above and the way beneath, and the reason and truth of Mr. Cecil's weighty remark, that the way of every man is declarative of the end of that man.

The first of our two Bridges is the Bridge of Faith and Prayer. We are crossing a roaring torrent. The passage is full of danger, for the surge beneath is certain destruction to those who fall therein. This Bridge of Faith and Prayer is the only safe and sure way across it. This Bridge is narrow, although it is perfectly safe, and it is found abundantly wide enough for all who will enter upon it. In some places, indeed, it seems almost like a line, and from the shore it is never visible far, except that the entrance upon it is very plain and positive, and not to be

mistaken. Sometimes, even to those who have entered upon it, it is almost imperceptible, except from step to step, except as the soul goes on, trusting. But always, if the soul will take *one* step, it shall see the next; and if the soul run ever so fast, step after step instantly becomes visible. The traveller can never out-run faith, so as to walk without it, but there is always firm footing found, even though sometimes when the foot was lifted to go on there seemed at first nothing but air for it to tread in.

Here I interrupted my conductor, and said to him, Your description reminds me of that passage in David, *My soul followeth hard after Thee; thy right hand upholdeth me.* I suppose the right hand of the Lord often upheld David in crossing this bridge, when both hand and bridge were almost, if not quite, invisible. Indeed, said my conductor, the supports of the Lord are much oftener invisible than visible; if they were not, if we could always see the Lord beside us, and feel, as with sensible evidence, his hand holding ours, where were our faith, or the need of it, or the discipline of it? But this narrow bridge is a bridge of faith and prayer. And whereas I said it could be seen from the shore but a little way out, this is because the life of every saint is a life hid with Christ in God; and though it will be proved by its fruits of holiness, and is marked by a plain profession at the entrance, yet the secret *source* of it is not visible to the world and never can be; neither can the daily secret *course* of it be visible, no otherwise than as a hidden stream is visible by the greenness and beauty of its banks.

It is the Bridge of Faith and Prayer. A prayerful soul is *always* prayerful, but only because at particular and proper times it does nothing else *but* pray. Now this Bridge, though so narrow, and often so like a line in the air, is supported by strong piers from interval to interval, with places of refuge upon them, where the soul may stop for a season in safety, and take breath, and gather strength

and wisdom to go over the next interval, trusting in God. These piers and refuges are places of prayer and seasons of prayer, in which the soul that is crossing often feels as if it would like to stay for days and weeks and months together, and never be obliged to step forth from them to trace the difficult and dangerous line of the passage. And this is a good feeling, as a foretaste of that rest which remaineth for the people of God, when prayers, and toils, and dangers shall be ended. But it is not a good feeling, if it keeps the soul back from duty. It was a good feeling which prompted Peter to say, If thou wilt, let us build here three tabernacles; and there Peter would have loved to dwell with those radiant forms forever; but it was not a good feeling when it made Peter forget a world lying in wickedness, and when it permitted Peter to tempt our blessed Lord away from his path of suffering unto death. So it is good for the soul to love its safe resting and sweet nestling, as a bird, in God; but it may possibly love to abide with God in such a way of sensible comfort as to be kept from pursuing the path that leads to God.

These places of rest in this world are like Christian's Arbor amid the Hill Difficulty; we cannot abide in them, for the refuges of prayer were not built for our indolent abode, or for our heaven upon earth, but as places where we may gain glimpses of heaven to encourage us onward, and strength for duty while advancing. So on we must go, tracing the next interval, there being no rest but beyond the roaring torrent, in those sweet fields, drest in living green, where everlasting spring abides, and never withering flowers. There we may rest; but while crossing the tempestuous flood of life, we may not stay, even in the place of prayer, longer than to get strength for the next interval of duty. And so the soul must go carefully, watchfully, from prayer to prayer; and doing this, the spirit of prayer will be increasing continually.

There are some parts of this Bridge commanded or over-

looked more advantageously than others by the great adversary of souls, the god of this world, where sometimes the fiery flaming darts of him and his crew come flying in upon the Pilgrim in such sort, that even with the shield of faith he has much ado to quench them. Here he has to fly as nimbly and swiftly as possible from refuge to refuge, from prayer to prayer, and perhaps to be a long while praying and a little while crossing, prayer itself being possibly his main duty. And indeed the place of prayer, when the soul is truly laboring there and fervent, is always the place of safety; and the difficulty with most Pilgrims is, that that they do not spend time enough in it, hurrying in and out confusedly, sometimes stopping where they should not, and sometimes not abiding where they should, and so giving Satan an advantage. It is a great thing to know how to use the weapon of All-prayer in this pilgrimage, and to know the worth and power of it from experience.

As to the narrowness of this Bridge, it seems beforehand much narrower than afterwards it is found to be, when once there is faith enough to start upon it. Some have been so greatly terrified and deterred by the straitness of it, as to say beforehand that they never shall be able to travel in such a way, and so they never set out; but the reason why it seems too narrow is because their own souls are so wide with the vanities of this life, wrapping them up and hanging about them. When they have once set out, it is found to be broad enough, not because it is not really so narrow as they imagined, but because their own earthly desires and views are narrowed, while their heavenly ones are expanded. Their heavenly desires and wants are found to be as wings at their shoulders, lifting them up, so that a mere touch of the foot upon the earth is enough to spring them forward on their passage; whereas their earthly desires, if encouraged and attended to, make their feet so broad and heavy, that the whole bridge is not wide enough to tread upon. And indeed,

they are often thus so burdened that they cannot lift one foot after another.

Let the soul once set out upon this Bridge, truly, heartily, and it becomes wider, easier, more secure, at every interval. Gradually the piers themselves seem to stretch out, enlarge, and come nearer to one another, till at length they fill almost the whole space, and become places of rest while the soul is following hard after God, and even while it feels faint in pursuing. The soul more and more clearly and delightedly sees the foundations of the Bridge, that it is built in God; and feels its stability, its security, its certainty, in the experience and increase of that faith, which is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. In this is fulfilled the declaration, that all believers, after they have believed, are sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of their purchased possession in Christ, until they get past the Bridge and have entered into heaven. With some, this earnest of the inheritance beforehand is larger and richer, but always it is glorious.

But the rest or refreshment of the Christian life not being the object for which this Bridge was built, neither is that the object of the soul in entering upon it. Obedience to God is the great business of the Christian's life, and if that be the Christian's anxiety, peace and happiness will follow; but whether it follow or not, the Christian's duty is the same, to trust God, and obey. This is sweetly expressed by Baxter:

“ Lord it belongs not to my care
Whether I die or live;
To love and serve thee is my share,
And this thy grace must give.
If life be long, I will be glad,
That I may long obey;
If short, yet why should I be sad,
That shall have the same pay?”

Now in proportion as duty and not rest becomes the great object of the soul, or holy usefulness and not mere enjoyment, in that proportion there will be rest and happiness; rest is found and experienced by such a soul, when another soul, that is seeking very anxiously for rest, but does not think so much of duty, misses of it. They that seek it for itself are not apt to find it; while they who seek to get forward by it, who seek it for God, and seek God in it, and the fulfilment of duty, find it in abundance.

Moreover, our blessed Lord has said, Come unto me, and I will give you rest; and it is not alone in heaven that he gives it, for there must be the beginning of rest in him even in this world, or there can be no such thing as rest in heaven. And all along this Bridge of Faith and Prayer he has provided and appointed places of wonderful refreshment, where he himself comes down and sits with the Pilgrims, gathering them around him, and giving them bread and wine, and holding interviews with them, which are a stay and support to the soul through all the journey. Yea, in the strength supplied by one such interview, rightly used, they are prepared to hasten on with a great and happy impulse. And their hearts often burn within them, not only at such interviews, but while they remember what he said, and how he walked and talked with them, and expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the things concerning himself.

The Sabbaths, as God has appointed them, are sweet refuges and refreshments to the soul upon this Bridge. Yea, they often seem as if they were the very days of heaven—angels' days rather than man's—they are so heavenly and precious. The soul may have been travelling in six whole days of rain, but in these Lord's days there always will be seasons of fair weather, gleams of glory, and bright shadows of true rest. They are like stars, or shining lustres, hung at intervals all along a dark way. The soul that loves them and marks them, walks in their

light all the week, and measures the way to heaven by them.

This Bridge is itself a path of light from beginning to end, although sometimes, as we have said, they who are travelling on it can see only the next step before them. But this is not any fault of the way, but generally an imperfection of faith; though a soul trusting in God will be satisfied and happy if it can see step by step in the path of duty, even if all around it there seems to be the very Valley of the Shadow of Death. The whole span of the bridge is really a line of light from beginning to end; and sometimes, in favorable weather, the soul can see clear across the flood, even where the line of light opens into heaven. Moreover, to those who are travelling, the light is constantly increasing; according to that heavenly law fixed by the Maker of the Bridge, that *the path of the just, as the shining light, shineth more and more unto the perfect day*. Some travellers, contrary to this law, seem to carry a cloud with them, and to have dark and stormy weather almost all the way; but this is often because they look into their own hearts for light, when they should be looking to the Saviour, and often because they seek more for comfort than Christ, but still oftener because they loiter by the way, and look behind them, at the things that are seen instead of those that are unseen. It is exceedingly desirable, and it is always a duty, for children of the light to walk *in* the light, as well as *by* the light, and to enjoy it within themselves, as well as to see it before them. Moreover, the Maker of the Bridge has himself said, I am the Way, the Truth, the Life. He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life. That is a beautiful expression—*the light of life*; it signifies something within, as well as without, an *experience* of light, as well as a sight of it, a living as well as a shining light. So in this experience, “unto the upright there

ariseth a light in the darkness," light within, even when it is dark without. So the Pilgrim may go on singing :—

My soul, there is a Country
 Afar beyond the stars,
 Where stands a winged sentry,
 All skilful in the wars.
 There above noise and danger
 Sweet peace is crowned with smiles,
 And One born in a manger
 Commands the beauteous files.
 He is thy gracious friend,
 And (O my soul, awake !)
 Did in pure love descend,
 To die here for thy sake.

If thou canst but get thither,
 There grows the flower of peace,
 The Rose that cannot wither,
 Thy fortress and thine ease.
 Leave then thy foolish ranges,
 For none can thee secure
 But One, who never changes,
 Thy God, thy Life, thy Cure.

HENRY VAUGHAN.

FEW THERE BE THAT FIND IT.

Now notwithstanding all this, said my Conductor, there are very few Pilgrims seen upon this first bridge, in comparison with the vast multitudes who have to cross the torrent. And it is because the Maker and Owner of that Bridge has put down the law also at its entrance: If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. There are many who would like the Life Everlasting, to which this Bridge is the only way, if they could have it without the self-denial, and the cross daily. And so the Lord of the Bridge has said, Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life. For strait is the gate, and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. But wide is the gate, and

broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be who go in thereat. If they would come to Christ at the outset, they would find the first way, though narrow and strait, easy and pleasant; for Christ's grace would make it pleasant, and no man would have to travel it alone, depending on himself, but with Christ in company, casting all care on him, and receiving grace and strength from him daily. But they neglect Christ; they go wrong at the very beginning, and the very beginning seems gloomy and difficult, because they are without Christ, and will not come to him. The very beginning of crossing this Bridge of life and happiness must be this very coming to Christ, and then every step of the way leads upwards, and is under his light, his guidance, his comfort. The way of life is above to the wise, that he may depart from hell beneath.

MANY THERE BE THAT GO IN THEREAT.

There is another Bridge below this, broad, easy, inoffensive to the natural man, apparently safe, built by the god of this world, crowded with thousands upon thousands. Those who enter upon it walk not by faith, but sense, and nevertheless, can see but a step or two beyond them, and moreover are too busy with themselves and one another to notice the condition of the Bridge, which, after those in it have gone too far to get back, and even before, is full of dangerous holes and pitfalls, through which multitudes are constantly dropping out of the throng, and disappearing in the roaring surge below. Nevertheless, the throng rolls on, heedless, insensible, expecting to reach the land, but destined all to plunge into the billows. For this Bridge has no landing-place, but terminates abruptly, far out in the very depths of the flood, broken off suddenly; so that the unsuspecting throng, just as fast as they come up to

that point, are pushed off without possibility of recovery, the crowding multitude behind always crowding on, insensible, and not knowing what is incessantly happening to those before. Sometimes a dismal shriek rises from those who discover the dreadful termination a little before their feet slide, but it is too late; you hear the shriek, the plunge, and all is over. Still the crowd roll on, generation after generation; whole families, and almost unbroken communities are seen together; on, on, on roars the tide below, on, on, on, never ceasing, pours the living tide above, till down it plunges, in a fall more resistless than the cataract, surge after surge rolling to destruction.

But, said I to my Conductor, how is it possible that all this ruin should go on and the multitude not know it, and so turn back, or refrain from a way that leads to certain perdition? Alas! replied he, they *do* know it, but in every individual case do not believe it in regard to themselves, or else persuade themselves that they shall escape and come off safely, where the whole multitude otherwise perish. Besides, the infatuation of men thus hurrying, excited, in the Broad Way, has something of insanity in it; for all men think all men mortal but themselves; and though Death is among them on the Bridge, striking this way and that; and though they are told beforehand of the awful termination of the way, and how the Bridge was put up by the god of this world purposely for man's ruin, yet this makes no difference in their career. As fast as one drops through the Bridge, another steps into his place, and for those who get to the termination, not having dropped through by the way, there is no possibility of return; they are brought into desolation as in a moment, they are utterly consumed with terrors, and their fall is without remedy, irrecoverable, final, in the overwhelming suddenness and anguish of despair.

At the entrance to this Bridge there is no want of signs and warnings, instructions written and spoken, and some-

times in a voice, the thunder of which may be heard even from the upper Bridge to the lower, and from one end of the Bridge to the other. There is that great warning in bright characters, *THE WAY OF LIFE IS ABOVE TO THE WISE, THAT HE MAY DEPART FROM HELL BENEATH.* And you may both hear and read the great proclamation, *TURN YE, TURN YE, FOR WHY WILL YE DIE !* And there are sign-posts and messengers pointing direct to the upper Bridge, and showing the way, and entreating the multitudes to walk in it. Nevertheless, almost all pass on in the broad, beaten, lower way, though some few, even after entering upon it, turn back, and with great effort, regain the way that leads to the narrow Bridge above. For even upon the turnpike of the god of this world the Lord of the upper Bridge has stationed his messengers to warn those who will listen, and to tell them of their sure destruction if they go on. There is no want of the plainest, most explicit warning.

Sometimes these faithful messengers have been thrust down, trampled on, and killed, in their work of mercy ; and often they have found it a desperate conflict to beat back the surge of ruin, and to regain, for those who listen to them, a footing once more of safety. But still they warn, they expostulate, they shout ; and sometimes a tone of startling power may be heard ringing through the whole distance of the Bridge, *Back ! put back, for your life ! Flee from the wrath to come !* But, alas, the living tide rolls on, unimpeded, and if one undertakes to stem it, he is almost borne down, and some look on him as out of his senses, and some salute him with shouts of ridicule, although some others regard him with seriousness, and seem to wish him well ; and some there are who wish also that they too had resolution enough to turn back with him. Blessed is the man who finds his way back, and takes the upper Bridge, trusting in God for mercy.

To make this easier, if a man will but turn, there are side landing-places and stair-ways, through which one may

rise out from among the crowd, and find a footing back, even on the outside of the Bridge ; and over these places is also posted the warning, *THE WAY OF LIFE IS ABOVE TO THE WISE, THAT HE MAY DEPART FROM HELL BENEATH.* And on the Sabbath days especially, men stand with the Book of Life in their hands, beseeching the multitude to stop in their career and turn back. And sometimes you may see large collections of people stopping and listening, quietly, and even solemnly ; but on Monday morning you will see nearly the whole of them hurrying on again as madly as ever with the crowd, and forgetful of all they heard and saw upon the Sabbath.

This Bridge of Death is a covered bridge, covered over so as to exclude the light from Heaven, but filled with dancing, glaring lights, and at the sides built up with booths and shops, theatres and operas. In these places of refreshment and amusement, put up by the god of this world, the tide throng in and out, revelling as they go ; they have music and dancing, eating and drinking, and ten thousand forms and expedients of gayety and pleasure. The apostle Peter spake of these things in his time, when he said that the years past of our life “ may suffice us to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, when we walked in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries. Wherein they think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.” Men are insensible of the flight of time amidst these absorbing pleasures and occupations, and not only often forget their mortality, but act as if they disbelieved it—as if they were to stay in their places of pleasure and business forever. But what is singular, and to a reflecting observer a very solemn peculiarity, they never come out at the same door, or in the same position, in these thronged chambers on the Bridge, at which they entered, but always farther on, farther on ; for each place of gayety lets out the throng at an advanced

door and post of travel on the broad road. The multitude do not notice this. Sometimes, though in very rare instances, a young man looks about him, and notices that he is not where he was when he entered, but has gone singularly onward, even while he was in the midst of his gayety in the glittering halls of sin and folly. And sometimes this awakens him to a sense of his danger. But the multitude do not notice nor consider, nor care to notice, but dance on from theatre to theatre, from show to show, from folly to folly, encouraging, sustaining, animating, and leading one another onward. The force of example and fashion is almost omnipotent.

And what makes it incalculably worse, and what, moreover, is very surprising, people meet with many persons in these shows at the sides of the Bridge, who profess to be travelling in the narrow way, and who say that no doubt they can go through these amusements to Heaven, and that the path thither is not so strait and narrow, by any means, as your gloomy fanatics would make it. But it was not a gloomy fanatic, but our blessed Lord himself, who said that the way was so strait and narrow. Nevertheless, these people contrive to hush their consciences, and endeavor to serve God and Mammon; and their example, wearing, as they sometimes do, the profession and garb of Christians, tends powerfully to prevent alarm on the part of those who might otherwise be conscience-smitten, and thus they support and encourage one another, and keep the Bridge, notwithstanding that it is the way of death, a scene of great apparent gayety and life. With many persons it seems to be regarded as sanctified, not by the word of God and prayer, as the apostle says our enjoyments should be, but by a bare profession of religion.

Another thing which powerfully tends to keep this Bridge a scene of gayety and insensibility, though it be the way of death, is the vast quantity of what is called light reading, scattered all along for the amusement and tempta-

tion of passengers. It is a material, even the best of it, which tends to divert the thoughts from anything serious or heavenly, and much of it is adapted, as it was intended, to set the passions on fire of hell. The god of this world, who governs the Bridge, keeps an immense, inexhaustible supply of it, in all shapes, for all tastes, habits and degrees of initiation. Immoral tales there are, which allure to vice, even while professing to depict its misery; and descriptions that teach depravity, and surround it with all the coloring of romance, while merely introducing the reader to the knowledge of human nature. Many are the souls drawn utterly and fatally beneath the power of the Destroyer by these pictures of sin, both in prose and poetry, which have so much the greater power, by how much the mind that meets them is young and inexperienced.

All these things being so, said I to my Conductor, how is it possible that any persons, once entered on this Bridge, can ever be reclaimed or drawn back again? It seems that without some miracle they must crowd on in an unbroken tide to ruin. If it rested with man only, answered he, it would be impossible; but with God all things are possible, and nothing is beyond the reach of his grace. Nevertheless it is true, that persons who are ever drawn back from these scenes, after they have become habituated to them, are as brands plucked from the burning. And it is with very solemn feelings that they look back upon their position, when they have regained a place of mercy, and entered on the way of faith and prayer. They who gain the upper Bridge, after having thus far and long ran forward on the lower, are great monuments of God's loving kindness and forbearance, of the power of his grace, and of the compassion of the Saviour. They were dead, but are alive again, they were lost, but are found; and there is joy in heaven over them, the redemption is so great and glorious.

At the very entrance of the way of life upon the upper Bridge, continued my Conductor, you may see affecting scenes. Sometimes dear families part there, to behold each other no more. One or two individuals perhaps enter on the narrow way, while the others hurry down to the great travelled thoroughfare. Sometimes all the members of a family but just one go in at the gate of faith and prayer, and that one strangely and awfully rushes down to the way of destruction. Sometimes the parents go in at the narrow way, and the children hurry on past it. But the prayers of the parents pursue them, and at every station on their own heavenly pilgrimage they look with anxiety, in hope that the lost ones may be found, and brought by Christ the Redeemer along with them, rescued from the way of death. Sometimes the children enter the blessed gate, while the parents pass on to the gate of destruction. And then the prayers of the children follow the parents. But in many, many cases, the separation is eternal. And always there are but few seen entering on the path of light, while millions on millions rush down to that of darkness.

So roll on these two tides ;—faith in the one, sense in the other ; prayer in the one, prayerlessness in the other ; yearning after God and self-abasement in the one, neglect of God and self-dependence in the other ; trembling anxiety in the one, heedlessness, riot, and sport in the other ; humble penitence in the one, hardness and an impenitent heart in the other ; the light of life upon the one, the darkness of the pit upon the other ; heaven at the close of the one, hell at the close of the other. O the tide of life ! the tide of life ! Solemn is the sight to a spiritual spectator, who sees its diverging ways, and the differing worlds into which it opens. Solemn is the sight to one who knows and feels that the tide of life is the tide of eternal habit and of character, advancing to the world of retribution.

Here, said my Conductor, is the end of our allegory,

and here we come back to Mr. Cecil's remark, that the way of every man is declarative of the end of that man. And here we run again into the track of your opening mood of thought, yea, we are far forward towards the conclusion of that train of reasoning upon the judgment. We have reason to believe and know, that the book of life is the book of judgment; not indeed the Lamb's Book of Life, but the book of *our* life, daily. As we live, so we shall be judged. We are indeed both developing and judging ourselves beforehand, by the way in which we are travelling; the development and the judgment will be *perfected* at the end. At whatever point in a man's character the end comes, there he remains immutable, there he is judged. This is that great word in Revelation, He that is unjust, let him be unjust still; and he that is filthy, let him be filthy still. But he that is righteous, let him be righteous still; and he that is holy, let him be holy still. At the great Harvest there will be the great Judgment of character, what are tares and what are wheat. And then the Husbandman Supreme will say to the reapers, Gather together the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them; but gather the wheat into my barn. After the Harvest there can be no new development or change of character; the tares cannot change into wheat, and the wheat can never become tares.

All this is simply the way of a man's mortal life, demonstrated and made eternal at the end. The way of prayerlessness and unbelief is the way of death; and an unbelieving, unpraying man now is daily living out the prophecy and judgment in regard to the end of his life; daily bringing to its fulfilment the prediction of the Saviour, If ye believe not in me, ye shall die in your sins. After this there is no more curative element, or possibility of change. For men to die in their sins, is just to be cut down by the reaper Death, as tares. There they lie, cut down; waiting for the angels; no more

growth, no more change; nothing now but the arm and the cord needed, that is to bind them in bundles to be burned.

Now, said my Conductor, let me add to the weighty remark of Mr. Cecil one more text from the Divine Book that gave him his heavenly wisdom: There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death. This is that way; this prayerless way, this way of worldliness and unbelief, this way of carelessness in sin, this Bridge of Destruction, this Broad Way; and many there be that go in thereat. Nor does any man know how much further he shall travel that way, before he comes to its end. The pitfall may be even now just at his feet, waiting for a few more steps, or perhaps even one, through which he is to disappear from the throng, and fall forever. He may be close upon the end of his way, and even while he is thinking of an effort to return, yet deferring it a little longer, the end may come within that very period of procrastination. Because his feet have not yet slidden, there is no security for him against that declaration of God, Their feet shall slide in due time. Surely, thou didst set them in slippery places; thou castedst them down into destruction. How are they brought into desolation as in a moment! They are utterly consumed with terrors.

Do you think, said I to my Conductor, that there is any peculiar meaning in that word *bundles*, as applied to the tares?—Gather them in *bundles* to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn. Why said he, there may be, if you choose, a very sad and solemn meaning, over and above what commonly meets the ear. It may mean that the wicked will be classified, and that evil will meet evil of the same form, and crime be associated with similar crime, habit with habit, disposition with disposition, in that outcast world after the Harvest, that world composed of the prayerless, the hopeless, the fearful, the unbelieving,

the abominable, and murderers, and whoremongers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all liars. Bundles of each ! You know well that the *tares*, in the description of the Judgment by Christ, are the same thing with the *chaff* in the preaching of John for repentance, and that both are reserved unto fire unquenchable. The enemy that sowed them is the Devil, and he will carry his own harvest to his own home.

On the other hand, he that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him. A wheat sheaf is a beautiful, cheerful, grateful thing, emblem of life, sweet seasons, and abundance, reminding us to put up the prayer, Give us this day our daily bread. But a bundle of tares, withered, dry, fruitless, the mere material for a crackling fire, is a warning image ; lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one, the sower of tares, and the proprietor of fire unquenchable. If you are of the tares, when the harvest comes, nothing can save you from going to your own place. If you are of the wheat, then, when the universe is burning, you will be safe in the barn of your Father—the kingdom of your Father, where the righteous shine forth as the sun.

Well, said I, the second part of your allegory is indeed solemn and sad, yet deeply instructive. But I wish you might close it with something sweeter, something rather like the first path of light, ending in heaven.

Why, said he, what can I give you sweeter than Christ's own words, Him that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out. Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly of heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. Every dark description of sin and its consequences, every sad and solemn revelation of the world of retribution after Harvest, is meant to give power to those sweet invitations. Either you must hold to the one, and

escape the other, or neglect the one, and endure the other. For, as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of this world. The Son of Man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity, and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth. Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. Who hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Yea, and you may hear other things if you listen attentively. You may hear the footsteps and the talk of beings of the invisible world more frequent than usual around you. You hear the Great Husbandman in his vineyard. He speaks to the dresser of it, Behold these three years I come seeking fruit of this fig-tree, and find none; cut it down; why cumbereth the ground? And you hear the interceding answer, Lord, let it alone this year also, till I shall dig about it and dung it. And if it bear fruit, well; but if not, then after that thou shalt cut it down. Perhaps *last* year this conversation was held concerning *you*. If so, how momentous is the question whether now, as the year pleaded for is waning, the Great Husbandman sees the signs of fruit. Does the year, so swiftly passing, sweetly travel on its way for him? Is the axe, which was in the hand of the dresser of the vineyard, dropped, because there is life in the fig-tree? Shall the appointment of harvest, in reference to you, be that of the angelic reapers, who are to do the blissful work of gathering the bright golden sheaves of Divine grace for heaven? The Lord bless thee out of Zion!

Methought Death laid his hands on me
And did his prisoner bind;
And by the sound methought I heard
His Master's feet behind.
Methought I stood upon the shore,
And nothing could I see,
But the vast ocean, with my eyes,
A vast Eternity!

Methought I heard the midnight cry,
Behold the Bridegroom comes!
Methought I was called to the bar
Where souls receive their dooms.
The world was at an end to me,
As if it all did burn :
But lo ! there came a voice from heaven,
Which ordered my return.

Lord, I returned at thy command.
What wilt thou have me do ?
O let me wholly live to thee,
To whom my life I owe ;
Fain would I dedicate to thee
The remnant of my days.
Lord, with my life renew my heart,
That both thy name may praise.

AN APOLOGUE ON FIRE.

I MET my friend and guide again after a little interval, and my thoughts were turned upon the harvest and the fire, especially the tares gathered in bundles to be burned. My guide led me to the consideration of the cure or quenching of fire by fire, and especially the prevention of fire among tares in the eternal world, by the tares of evil habits being gathered in bundles, and burned up in this world. I shall just report his own words, without stop or question, from beginning to end.

THE FIRES OF SATAN, AND THE FIRES OF GOD.

There is a great fire burning in the world. Wickedness burneth as the fire. Sometimes it is a low, concealed, smouldering fire, like spontaneous combustion in the hold of a cotton ship, kept for a time from bursting forth into a flame. So the fire of sin holds on, unsuspected, in a man's nature, especially a man who has been relying on his own morality, and has never been taught the nature of sin by the Spirit of God. So it burns in his hold, even in the very cargo of his virtues, even while, with all sail set, and marked of the world for the beauty and stateliness of his appearance, he keeps his course across the ocean of life, in full confidence of a harbor. He may keep the hatches down for a season, and may think all is well, but the fire is burning, and even if he should get into port, the moment

the vessel is opened for discharging, it will be all one sheet of flame.

Sometimes it is an open fire, and leaps and rolls and hisses up, like a fierce forest conflagration. So it often burns in great and open sins, with individuals and communities. The sins of Sodom were a flaming fire more terrible and devouring than the storms of burning brimstone. The fire unseen, or unacknowledged, is infinitely worse than that which is seen and guarded against. The sins of the cities buried beneath the lava of Vesuvius were worse than the fires of the burning mountain, though pouring down in torrents. Open or concealed, in single souls, or families, or cities, or kingdoms, or conflicting armies, wickedness burneth as the fire; it burneth the world over, *this* world.

But there is a greater fire coming; the day when all that do wickedly shall be burned up like chaff with fire unquenchable. *Now* there is a restraint even upon the fire of sin; then there will be none. God will let it burn on, and take its own way without interruption. And not only so, but the great globe itself, and all that is therein, shall be burned up; and then all minor fires that remain burning, when all that is material shall have been consumed, shall be themselves, with death and hell, cast into the lake of fire that burneth everlastingly. Happy is he in whom, or about whom, this great day of fire shall find nothing but what is material to consume; happy he, in whom the fire of the Great Refiner beforehand has burned up all that was sinful, and left an immortality of holiness and blessedness. Happy the soul in Christ, at that day of doom. In that fire, everything will be burned up that can be, and if anything outlasts that fire, and keeps on burning, it will be just only a sinful soul, just the fire unquenchable. All the smoke you will see when the universe is burned up, and the elements themselves shall have melted with flaming heat, will be the smoke of the bottomless pit, a combustion of

unquenchable wickedness, amidst the blackness of darkness forever.

There are different kinds of fire ; and one kind may be but the emblem of another. There is the fire of Divine love, a fire of ecstatic life and enjoyment in the soul, a fire that burns up sin, removes the dross, and shows God's image. Material fire is an emblem of that, for it flames up towards heaven ; it seeks the sun, and subdues all things to itself, and purifies all things. But there is also the fire of selfishness and sinful passion, and of that likewise material fire is an emblem, painful, overmastering, consuming all the forms of material life, beauty and happiness, reducing the costliest things to ashes, producing in an animated frame intolerable agony. There is, both in a material and spiritual point of view, a fire of refinement and purification, and a fire of wrath and punishment.

Now it makes a great difference whether a man sets the fire himself, or God sets it ; and also, whether a man sets the fire himself, or leaves his heaps of dry chaff in the way to catch it. If a man leaves the chaff and stubble of his sins within and around him, his own breath as fire shall in due time devour him. But if a man will set fire to his own sins, instead of cherishing the fire of sin, and gathering materials for it, he shall save himself by fire from the fire. If we will judge and condemn ourselves, Paul says we shall not be condemned. And Christ says, If thine eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee ; or if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee. It is better to enter into life by so doing, than to go into hell-fire with two hands or two eyes, prepared for that fire in the service of sin. A man may either keep kindling and cherishing the fires of sin in his being, or he may, by God's grace, kindle a fire against sin itself, and may burn up his own sins. If he will set this fire himself, he may be saved ; there shall be no fire for him hereafter ; but if he leaves his sins to catch fire from abroad, or leaves them

to be burned up by God's avenging fire, he is lost, and nothing can save him. Man sets the fire *of* sin, God only sets the fire *against* sin; man may destroy himself, God only can save him.

And so it makes a great difference whether God sets the fire from within or from without; and whether he sets the fire as a consumer or an avenger, to burn up sin, or to punish it; whether he acts as a refiner and purifier, or a just and holy judge, executing the law against the sinner. If God sets the fire from within, it is the fire of his grace, and it burns up the sin, but spares the sinner, and saves him from the fire unquenchable. If God sets the fire from without, he does it while in this world, oftentimes to make the sinner see and feel the terribleness of the fire in his own soul, and the necessity of having it extinguished. I have set him on fire round about, says God, describing these merciful methods of his providence, yet he knew it not; yea, I have burned him, yet he laid it not to heart. And if this state of things continues, if a man thus hardens himself in sin and heedlessness, even under God's correction, then that must take place which God speaks in regard to such persons, that under all their glory and pride, he will kindle a burning like the burning of a fire. And the Light of Israel shall be for a fire, and his Holy One for a flame, and it shall burn and devour his thorns and his briers, and the glory of his forest and his fruitful field, both soul and body.

So that it makes also an infinite difference whether God sets his fire in this world or the next. If in this world, and it is the fire of his providence, it may bring the sinner to repentance, and save him from the fire everlasting; if it is the fire of his grace set within the soul, it will save the sinner from every other fire, and render every other either harmless or wholesome. But if God's fire be resisted, and the experience of it reserved to the world to come, there it can no longer be a fire of grace, but only of

punishment. God's own attributes are as a fire. Our God is a consuming fire. But the sinner makes his own election whether God shall burn up his sins by grace, or burn himself up because of his sins; if he chooses to hold forever to his sins, then will God burn *him*. God is a consuming fire to sin, and to the sinner if he holds to sin. But if any will trust in him,—will come to him in obedience and faith, to be delivered from sin, for such he will be only a consuming fire to their enemies, and a refiner's fire to themselves. For I, saith the Lord, speaking of his loving kindness to his church and people, will be unto them a wall of fire round about them, and a glory in the midst of them. We must all have God to be for us either this protecting wall of fire, and this inward fountain of light and glory, or else a consuming fire upon us and against us because of sin.

Now let me call your attention to a familiar illustration of these principles. I have read of a missionary travelling among the prairies in South Africa, overtaken by a fire in the long dry grass over which the course of the journey lay. The progress of the flames, from the moment when their roar became audible, and the smoke visible in the distance, was fearfully rapid, beyond anything the man had ever seen or heard of. He and his party, with their wagons, oxen and all, came near being burned to destruction. The roar of the flames was like that of artillery, and they ran along the ground like a thick continuous sheet of lightning. Not one moment was to be lost. The missionary jumped from his wagon, with a box of lucifers in his hand, intending, by setting fire to the dry stubble immediately around them, and so letting it burn from the centre outwards, to clear a place for the feet of the oxen, and cause them to pass into it with the party, so that the driving sheet of flame should not envelop and overwhelm them—otherwise they would have dropped dead in the midst of it. On hastily opening the lucifer box, to his extreme terror he

found it contained only two remaining matches, and the first one of those failed. What a moment of suspense and anxiety! Most providentially and happily the second match struck fire, and in less than a minute the grass around them was in flames, and a space was cleared outwards, into the centre of which they drove. But it was scarcely done when the main body of the fire reached them, leaping, careering, like ten thousand demons frantic for their prey. Had not the space been cleared by their own burning, before the whirlwind of fire swept by, its baptism would have left them lifeless. And even as it was, they were in great danger. Although they crowded together as far from the fire as the space they had gained would admit, yet the heat was almost beyond endurance, and for a few seconds they could scarcely breathe. Nevertheless, the flames touched them not, and in three minutes they were safe, and the fiery whirlwind was tossing and roaring beyond them. Before it came they had burned up the materials that otherwise would have fed it to their own destruction.

Now there is a great moral in all this. We must set fire to our own homebred, individual, and social evils, or we shall have no space to stand upon in the midst of the great fire that comes roaring over the world. It burns with rapid, resistless, overwhelming fury, even this side the grave, enveloping the soul that is not prepared against it, in a scathing flame of temptation. But when a man, by the reformation and regeneration of his own nature, through God's grace, has cleared a space around him, or rather when God has cleared it for him, it is a wonderful defence against the fires of sin on every side. If this be not done, if his own sins are set on fire from abroad, if the devil's fires that come sweeping over the prairies of this world, find the dry grass of the man's passions all ready, like tinder, neither mown down nor burned over by himself, the fire will go over him and burn him up. But if he has

been working beforehand, and has himself begun the burning at his own door, in his own heart, in his own habits, all the fires that can be set sweeping around him will not harm him.

Now you may apply this to social evils, to moral, and even material nuisances of every kind. Put out of the way all exciting causes of a pestilence like the cholera, remove the filth from your streets, ventilate your houses, make the habits of the people cleanly, and above all, burn up or remove all intoxicating drinks, and make the habit of temperance universal, and then, although a European atmosphere with the cholera stratum shrouded in it should cross the Atlantic, and brood like the wings of the Destroying Angel over our city, yet the plague might not *take*; the pestilential miasma might not strike from the cloud, just for want of those conducting agents to which it has been accustomed, and with which it has such friendly and fearful affinities. But let the streets be filled with accumulated filth, and the houses with impure air, let whole squares of miserable buildings and cellars be crowded with squalid, vicious, dissolute tenants, and above all, let the dram shops at every corner be kept open, and let intemperance prevail, and then not at one, but at a thousand points, the plague will take, the infection will spread, the lightning of death will strike.

Now in all cases, they who go to the source of evils, they who labor to remove the causes of them, they who set in operation the means of prevention, they who gather up out of the way the materials that otherwise would be food for the fire, are doing one of the noblest works of personal and social benevolence. If, by God's grace, they are carrying on this reformation with themselves, they are preparing and fixing conductors for the mercy of heaven, not its wrath—for the element of life, not death—they are creating and setting at work disinfecting agencies, not noxious ones. Every evil habit that they conquer, every

vicious element they neutralize or annihilate is an insurance for the benefit of society. Could only ten men, or even five, of Sodom, have been persuaded to follow the example, adopt the religious principles, and obey the God of Lot, the whole dissolute city would have been safe from the gathering storms of fiery vengeance. So the best patriot, the best lover of his city and his country, is he who becomes from the heart and in the life a true Christian. That person is doing the greatest work for his country and his race, who is growing most in grace, and in the knowledge and likeness of his God and Saviour.

And in regard to work done upon and in behalf of others, those persons especially are doing a great and glorious work, who are seeking and gathering immortal beings to be changed and purified. He that winneth souls is wise, not he that is most skilful in gathering grains of gold and washing them. They who are gathering children out of the streets, preserving them from places of temptation and infamy, and making such arrangements for them that they shall grow up to be themselves the reforming elements and agents of society, instead of the coadjutors, the tools, the materials of the great malignant Incendiary, are doing a great part towards the world's redemption. All who are thus taught, thus purified, instead of offering food for the fires of Satan sweeping over the world, are constituting a clearing where the fire finds no nourishment, and shall have no power. The Sabbath school makes many such clearings. The institution of the Home for the Friendless makes such a clearing. It is one of the rallying places of strong virtue and piety in the city—one of the centres of refuge, where God's good Providence and grace, and not the fires of sin, have burned over a space for us to occupy safely, amidst the flames roaring around us. The vantage ground thus gained ought to be well held. It should be improved to the uttermost. Let this work of benevolence be sustained, and not only sustained, but let the means of its

benevolent operations be increased, and, generation after generation, it will be an incalculable blessing to society.

But this is a thing by the way. The great instruction for us is personal, as to our own escape from the fire, or preparation for it. There is really no escape, but by the burning up of our own sins, within us and round about us. The fire which consumes sin, and is lighted, by God's grace, for ourselves, must meet the fire that sin feeds, and so stop it, giving us in Christ a place of safety. Let fire meet fire in this world, and we are safe; but if we wait for the fire to overtake us from abroad first, then we are lost. The fire will be set, and either in this world or the next we must experience it. If we experience it here, we may be saved from it in the next world. Either here or there, God himself will set it, and I have said that it makes an infinite difference whether God sets the fire against sin in this world or the eternal world. But in reality it is already set there, and it is roaring on to meet every sinful creature, although it was prepared not for man, but for the devil and his angels. If God sets it in this world, it is to meet and conquer the fire unquenchable, by destroying all the material which would otherwise be presented for that fire to prey upon. It is the fire of grace overcoming sin, which is the elemental fire of hell. But the work of grace is finished in this world; there is no conflict of grace against sin in the next world; the dross must all be burned away here, and Christ's image established, or there will be no burning there but the everlasting burnings; and if the fire be set in the next world for us, it can be only the fire of retributive justice.

God warns us of it, calls our attention to it, shows us that in our sins we are directly in its path, and as a bundle of dry tares are prepared for it, to be consumed by it. God gives us time to clear ourselves a space to stand upon, but no time to lose; the flame may be close at hand; it may be upon us before we are aware. We have God's

word and God's grace, with which we may strike the fire that shall save us, but we must do it quickly, or the fire will be on us, over us, within us, around us. We may hear its roar, its thunder; we may see its lurid glare. We may possibly think it is yet distant, but it comes with incredible swiftness, and wo to those whom it overtakes in the stubble of their sins. They are brought into desolation as in a moment; they are utterly consumed with terrors.

Now suppose that in reference to the world to come, and the fires of retribution there, we were placed like that Missionary, with only two more opportunities of escape remaining; just as he, on opening his box, found to his alarm that there were but two matches left. Would there be any time to be lost? But we are merely supposing what all the world over, beneath the light and offers of the gospel, is a reality, continually, with some. With whom, by name, is a matter of perfect uncertainty to us, but not to God. But suppose it were our case. Suppose we had come to our *last* opportunity, and the fire roaring upon us, what is to be done? Can *we* stop the fire, turn it back, put it out, or cover ourselves with a garment that shall be proof against it? Who is he that can do this but God only, God in Christ, God our Saviour? Who else can forgive sins but he only? Who can pluck from the soul one rooted sorrow, or in the least minister to a mind diseased, but he, the Great Physician of the soul? It is upon him that we must cast ourselves, and thus only can we be safe. Our very anxiety is such sometimes that in a case of extreme danger we hardly know what to do with our very opportunities. And the soul under conviction of sin is sometimes like a theatre on fire with the doors opening inward, but the terrified inmates, in their very anxiety to escape, pressing against them and closing them irrecoverably. Just so our souls, under sentence of God's holy law, are full of fiery accusing thoughts, and we press against the doors of deliverance, and Christ only

can open them. But he opens them to faith, and puts out the fires, and saves us. Nay, he gives us the faith first, puts it into our bosoms, as a key, just as Christian found the Key of Promise that could open every lock in Doubting Castle, kept by Giant Despair. Then we hear his voice, The Key! the Key! Try the Key, and come forth into life and liberty!

Sinful habits are fearful, fiery things. Ordinarily they are eternal; it is rare that they are changed. And a single choice may become a habit, may take precedence in the whole character, and grow into a despotism that never can be broken. Most of those persons who perish through intemperance, forge in the fires of youth the first links of the dreadful chain that envelops them. The Latin maxim is full of wisdom, *Obsta principiis. Resist the beginnings.* Let not the present pleasures or gratifications with which Satan, or your tempting companions, or your own ungoverned passions, may allure you to evil, prevail with you to begin the dread habit of indulgence. Beware the first step of a habit, or if you have taken it, break from it before it becomes eternal. Break from it now, or it is *likely* to become eternal. Remember that the pleasure is only momentary; the habit to which, for the pleasure, you sell your birth-right, is inveterate, and comes at last to be nothing but agony. That great writer, Mr. Coleridge, says, speaking of vicious pleasures, in part from his own dread experience of evil, and therefore the more solemnly, "Centries, or wooden frames, are put under the arches of a bridge, to remain no longer than till the latter are consolidated. Even so, pleasures are the devil's scaffolding to build a habit upon—that once formed and steady, *the pleasures are sent for firewood, and the hell begins in this life.*"

THE TWO TEMPTATIONS:

AND THE DISPOSITION OF THEM.

PART I.

A FEW days after this, my former guide met me with another text and story, for which he had both a prologue and epilogue to match. He said the text was merely a condensed description of a good deal of the piety of modern times, though some might deny its application. It was that pithy rebuke by the Prophet Hosea, *My people ask counsel at their stocks*. Do you think, said he, that there ever was a Wall-Street in Judea? Did the people there ask counsel at their *stocks*, more habitually than they do now in London? Stocks now are one of the most universal synonymes of riches; stocks in the olden time were idols; which form, think you, now, of the idol, is most heartily and universally worshipped?

The old fashioned heathen and Pagan idolatry said of *their stocks*, Ye are our father, and of a stone, Thou hast made me. The more customary idolatry of covetousness in modern times also worships *stocks*, and says of any acute successful speculation in them by the worshipper, It has been the making of him. Stocks are doubtless worshipped now, not indeed exactly in the same way as of old, but still as the god of the affections, a household, social, and commercial god. In the same manner the *staff* in old times was used for divination, and so men relied upon their

staves ; “ their staff declareth unto them.” Now that this kind of heathenish divination is exploded, men have another staff to declare unto them. A man idolatrous in the way of covetousness leans upon his wealth as his staff, and makes that his diviner, his seer, his soothsayer.

Both these things are idolatry ; and it is hard to say, considering the greater light upon the one than the other, which is the worse. Under the new and more spiritual dispensation we have reason to fear there is almost as much idolatry as under the old. Both forms of idolatry lavish gold out of the bag, and weigh silver in the balance, and hire a goldsmith, and he maketh it a god ; they fall down, yea, they worship. It is all one, whether the god is in the form of a golden calf, or a doubloon, so it commands the affections. Jeremiah says that the stock is a doctrine of vanities. And Isaiah says, Shall a man be such a fool, as to fall down to the stock of a tree ? Isaiah’s description of the heathen idolatry is marvellously true of the idolatry of wealth. “ He burneth part thereof in the fire, with part thereof he eateth flesh ; he roasteth roast, and is satisfied ; yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the fire. And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven image. He falleth down unto it, and worshippeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my god.” Just so, a man whose soul is in his wealth, uses its surplus for his appetites, his wants, his luxuries, his pleasures, and saith, I am warm, I have seen the fire ; and the residue he maketh a god. His god is his great accumulating capital. To that he looks with ardent worship, and he carries towards the idol of his devotion that entireness, and supremacy of service which in the worship of God is of infinite value ; an eye single.

I think, said I, that you might have found a more pointed and comprehensive text than that, if you had wished to preach a sermon on the love of money, not to speak of Paul’s proverbs. What is that in Habakkuk ? “ Wo to him that

coveteth an evil covetousness to his house, that he may set his nest on high, that he may be delivered from the power of evil."

Well, said my guide, this again is but the worship of stocks; "deliver me, for thou art my god." A man's whole dependence in such a case, is upon his riches; these being secured, he deems his nest unassailable, and dreams of security from evil. "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." This self-dependence, this dependence on gold and silver and not on God, this feeling of security, when a man has thus set his nest on high, and become a man of an independent fortune, is that which alienates the soul from God, diminishes its sense of dependence on him, nay, renders such a feeling insupportable, and makes the soul ready to say, in regard to God, according to that true picture drawn in the book of Job, Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways. This is the reason why covetousness is, and is called, idolatry. This was that idolatry apparent in the case of the young man with great possessions, to whom our blessed Lord made known the seemingly severe condition, that if he would have a part in the kingdom of heaven, he must sell all that he had, and give to the poor.

You say *seemingly* severe, said I; was it not *really* a pretty hard and severe requisition? It is generally so considered.

That, said my guide, depends upon the character. It may have been hard for him, with his feelings and habits; it may have been hard, and without Christ's grace impossible for him to comply with it, having such a heart. But as to severity, looked at in the right light, according to the reality of things, there was no severity about it; it was an infinitely generous and easy condition. Sell? Give? Why! if the globe had been made of solid gold, or had been one entire and perfect chrysolite, or diamond, wherewith the possessor of it might purchase the whole

planetary system, and had belonged to this young man, it would have been nothing to pay for *one year's* enjoyment of *heaven*; but for an eternal abode in heaven, for the possession of the Spirit of heaven, and of life everlasting in Christ, the man's possessions, though they had included the temple itself, were not fit to be named in comparison; they were as flakes of dirt, which he might brush from the border of his mantle. Seemingly severe? What would be thought of a lawyer or merchant, who, if you offered him the whole of California, with all the proceeds of that El Dorado for forty years to come, in exchange for a life lease of his dingy office in South street or Wall street, should turn away from you exceeding sorrowful at so hard a bargain? An eternity of blessedness in exchange for that man's houses in Jerusalem or farms in Judea? Why, if it had been a commercial offer, or indeed a business transaction in any way, the idea of severity in the terms would be infinitely absurd. But in truth our blessed Lord was just simply trying the spirit of the man; he would bring out, to his own view, the covetousness, the earthliness, the supremacy of self, in his heart. All Judea sold and given to the poor could have been no purchase of heaven. But the spirit, the temper, the heart, which should have given up all at Christ's suggestion, and out of love to him, would have been heaven itself. And Christ showed him that without that spirit, that heart, weaned from its earthly treasures, delivered from its sordid covetousness, there was no place in heaven for him, and no *possibility* of heaven.

Our Lord saw that the dependence of that young man, notwithstanding his religious education, was upon his wealth, and not upon God, and that until that earthly dependence was taken away, his soul would not come to God. His wealth kept him *from* God, and had the entire control of his affections, and his wealth must be removed, if he was to be saved, unless his affections could be removed from it; if not, the only hope in his case would be

to take away his wealth, the only beginning of a possibility of bringing him to God. He wrapped himself about in his wealth, and covered himself up in it, as the stay and preserver of his life and happiness, but it kept him out of heaven, it kept the life of God from being enkindled in his soul. Anything will do this, on which the heart is fixed supremely, and so is kept from God. And while this is the case, a man may come in vain, even to Christ himself, with the inquiry, Good Master, what good thing shall I do to inherit eternal life?

What good thing? Why, the whole current and habit of your soul must be changed, and if you are not ready for that, you must give up the idol your soul is set upon, or else it must be taken from you, or otherwise there is no hope in your case. The fire of God can never be kindled within you beneath the suffocating weight of your farms and merchandize.

John Newton says that he once set out to light a candle with the extinguisher upon it. Many a man sets out to light the candle of the Lord within him, as this young man did, with the extinguisher of wealth or pleasure upon it, or the craving desire *after* wealth and pleasure. He must remove the extinguisher. He need not throw his wealth away, but he *must* remove it from that place in his soul, or it is idolatry; he must remove it from his affections, or it stands between him and God, it shuts him out from heaven. A man coming to light his candle need not throw away the extinguisher, but he *must* remove it. And so a man need not absolutely renounce or throw away his wealth and pleasure, unless, indeed, they have been unlawfully and fraudulently gained, or are in themselves sinful; but he *must* cast them down out of that place in his heart where they have excluded God from his affections. He must be willing, should God call for it, to give up all for God. He must give God the first and supreme place in his existence, and must begin to use his wealth, if he

already possesses it, *for* God, or if he is seeking it, he must seek it as God's steward, God's servant, to do with it the will of his Lord. No man can serve two masters; for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.

Well, said I, it is not wise to make the way of salvation harder than it really is, nor to put the forbidding things foremost.

Why, said my Conductor, there are *no* forbidding things to be put either foremost or hindmost, if the heart be right; it is all brightness and beauty. True religion cannot have less than the whole heart, and it never asks more; and when that is given, all things are full of ease, delight, and love. The religion of the cross is not a savage, morose, pleasure-hating, or wealth-hating religion, but far from it. It is the only religion that has at heart the pleasure, the happiness, the true wealth of man. It is a religion of infinite enjoyment, joy unspeakable and full of glory. It is not a monkish, gloomy ascetical religion, binding a man to poverty; but one of its very prayers is, Give me *neither* poverty nor riches. But it does bind a man to poverty of spirit, meekness and gentleness and lowliness of heart, which is the true riches. It tells all men that if they be lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, they exclude themselves from his kingdom. It does not despise money, nor forbid its acquisition, but it says that the *love* of money is the root of all evil. It would sanctify both our pleasures and possessions by making the love of God, and not of our blessings, supreme in the soul. It is not a religion that prevents or forbids a man from enjoying himself, but it shows him and leads him into the only possible way whereby he *can* enjoy himself. It is a religion that looks out for his enjoyment, makes that a special object, and prepares him for it, and would prevent him from rendering it everlastingly impossible. It is a religion that will

not let a man take counsel at his stocks, because that would ruin him, nor lean upon his staff, because as a splintered reed it would pierce him. It delivers him from the feverish thirst and anxiety of pleasure, by making him happy in God. A man can enjoy himself, only by loving God supremely, only by being delivered from the dominion of selfishness. He that seeketh his life shall lose it, but he that loseth his life for Christ's sake shall find it.

Ah, said I, if you could make men understand this, you would gain a mighty point in our world ; but you cannot do it. No, indeed, said my Guide ; nothing but Divine Grace can do it. And there is, on this point, a sad and awful mistake with the children of this world, and that too with some who fancy themselves far advanced on pilgrimage to a better world. Read the dialogue between Money-love, Hold-the-world, Save-all, and By-ends, in the Pilgrim's Progress, and you will have a picture to the life, of the maxims of the world brought into the things of religion, and the kind of character thus formed. You will remember that these gentlemen were the parties with whom Christian and Hopeful fell in, just when in their pilgrimage they had arrived in the neighborhood of the gold-region. The conversation of these men, and their religion also, was such as suited the climate of the mines, such as betokened the nearness and prevalence of some powerful temptation. They were described in Paul's Epistle to Timothy as men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness. The true Pilgrims, Christian and Hopeful, had no sooner shaken off the company of these men, than they came in their journey upon a delicate plain called Ease ; which plain is much wider now than it was then ; so wide, indeed, that thousands have settled there on farms and in villages, going for the present no farther in their pilgrimage. At that time the plain was narrow, so that though they travelled upon it with much content while it lasted, yet they quickly got over it.

It may represent one of those intervals of quiet and sunshine in the condition of the Church of God, which, by its temptations to the habit of self-indulgence, puts the Pilgrims in danger, and but poorly prepares them for encountering the difficulties and self-denials before them. In our day, this plain is broad, almost interminably. And though there is an inscription on the King's highway as you pass through it, *Wo to them that are at ease in Zion*, yet a great many are at ease, in very various forms of self-indulgence amidst the rich gardens of this plain. Very few go straight over it on the King's way. The Pilgrims, Christian and Hopeful, travelled on it with much content, while it lasted, but as they did not stop in their pilgrimage for the purpose of enjoying its comforts, but kept straight on, only admiring the sweet scenery by the way, and thanking God that they could enjoy it while travelling, and that the way of duty was so sweet and pleasant, they soon got over it, and must follow on, whatever the way might be that came after it. The *spirit* of ease and self-indulgence would have led them to tarry for a while in the *country* of ease, and to have bought, or at least hired, a pretty little cottage in the plain, where they might enjoy life for a season without travelling. But they were men of a different spirit. They thought continually of those sweet fields beyond the swelling flood, at the end of their pilgrimage, the everlasting spring, the never-withering flowers, the holy paradise of God. And they heard continually a voice behind them, saying, *Arise ye, and depart hence, for this is not your rest; because it is polluted it shall destroy you, even with a sore destruction. Dangerous rest, indeed, that kept the mind, the thoughts, the heart, the feet, from heaven. Anything is dangerous that cannot be enjoyed by the way, but for which you have to stop in the way, or to go out of the way; anything is dangerous that stops you in your pilgrimage, and that you cannot take along with you.* Christian had already gained

some bitter experience in the Hill Difficulty, as to the danger of stopping for rest ; thereby for a season he lost his roll of assurance.

Well, at the further side of that Plain was a little Hill called Lucre, and in that Hill a silver mine, which some of them that had formerly gone that way, because of the rarity of it, had turned aside to see ; but going too near the brink of the pit, the ground being deceitful under them, broke, and they were slain ; some also were maimed there, and could not, to their dying day, be their own men again.

I beseech you, mark that pregnant sentence of the Dreamer ; *some who were maimed there, could not to their dying day be their own men again.* There are those who know this from experience. There are those in whom the light of the Lord once shone sweetly, brightly, serenely, when with a single eye, and humble, meek, unworldly, affectionate heart, they set out on their pilgrimage, full of ardor, full of prayer, trembling at every danger, keeping near to Christ ; whose first real turning out of this heavenly way was a step or two to see these mines, and a consequent desire and determination to be rich at any rate. Then they entered, and began to dig. Then gradually self, instead of Christ, got uppermost in digging, and the spirit of the world entered into the heart, and the light of the Lord became less and less in it. For generally the diggers that stay in those mines do not dig by the lights of heaven,—can dig better in the dark, indeed, after getting accustomed to it. So the damps of the mines first made the inward heavenly light burn low, then it almost went out ; and if the Pilgrims ever got back out of the dungeon, it was with their Christian hope almost extinguished, their spirituality of mind diminished and darkened, their faith dim and feeble, the seals of God's love in Christ, that once shone so brightly, almost invisible. If they got back at all, it was only by such care and intercession of Christ for them, as he made for Peter on a like occasion, when Satan sifted him as wheat,

and his only salvation was by the main force of Christ's prayer, *I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.* If they got back at all, it was in such a condition, so maimed and prostrate, that they could not to their dying day be their own men again.

The spirit of this world, the spirit of the love of gain, as also any other besetting sin, if it once gets into the heart of the Christian, makes fearful havoc with his piety. You may enter into the speculations of Demas with your face bright with the light from the Celestial City; but ah, when you come back, *if* you come back, what a change! Pale, anxious, foreboding; deep wounds of conscience within, and the scars of an enemy who has been searing your conscience, while you have been digging; he has been watching over you with his hot iron; perhaps you will be in bondage all your life long, and saved only so as by fire. There is a deal of this maiming of Christians accomplished by the god of this world, in one way and another, even when he does not succeed in utterly destroying them. They bear about, not the marks of the Lord Jesus, but of Satan; and not scars like Great Heart's, received in deadly battle against Apollyon, but scourges of his iron whip, while they have been digging for him, or otherwise indulging their own passions in his service. They cannot, to their dying day, be their own men again. Long neglects of prayer, while in pursuit of the things of this world, will of themselves alone be sufficient to produce this mischief. It is a thing to be most earnestly guarded against. O that we were all bright and shining lights, that a man can walk by, read by, run by, work by; bright and shining lights instead of dim, ineffectual hazes, almost put out by the damps of the mines, the clouds of damps hanging around them, and making them like gloomy dim lamps in horn lanterns. Hear what Christ saith. If thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light. Hear again what Christ saith about moth and rust, and the heart being where the treasure is. Hear

likewise the saying of a man, who possessed the gift of a large measure of the Spirit and the wisdom of Christ, the excellent Leighton. A man, he says, may drown himself in a puddle, as well as in the sea, if he will down and bury his face in it. There is no evil passion, though it have but a corner of the heart for its exercise, but will ruin the man and his piety, if he make it a spared and darling lust. Hear the language of a wise old Christian Poet on the bosom-sin :—

Lord, with what care hast thou begirt us round !
 Parents first season us ; then schoolmasters
 Deliver us to laws ; they send us bound
 To rules of reason, holy messengers,
 Pulpits and Sundays ; sorrow dogging sin ;
 Afflictions sorted ; anguish of all sizes ;
 Fine nets and stratagems to catch us in ;
 Bibles laid open ; millions of surprises ;
 Blessings beforehand ; ties of gratefulness ;
 The sound of glory ringing in our ears ;
 Without, our shame ; within, our consciences ;
 Angels and grace ; eternal hopes and fears !

Yet all these fences, and their whole array,
 One cunning BOSOM-SIN blows quite away !

Well, said I, the love of money is not the only bosom-sin, nor the hardest to be conquered. No, said my guide, there are other besetting sins, both tyrannous and strong, but this is the most universal ; and often it is the most dangerous to those who are the subjects of no particular immoral, but darling appetite or lust, and in whose way towards heaven there does not, therefore, seem to be any particular hindrance. But let us go on with our survey of this temptation.

In our day this little Hill Lucre has grown into a great mountain, and the silver mine has become a gold mine, and more than all that, the god of this world has so altered the ground, that instead of entering the mine by deep pits, all these evidently dangerous shafts are now covered up, and a

man may dig anywhere, on apparently firm ground, and get plenty of gold in the open air, with only the labor of washing the dirt from it, in the streams that issue from the mountain. But whereas formerly the Pilgrims that turned aside to look at the mines or to work in them had sometimes fallen into the pits and been slain, and sometimes, if they ever escaped with life, had been so sadly bruised and maimed, or poisoned and sicklied with the unwholesome damps, that ever afterwards they had to go halting, and with fearful hearts, and with great discomfort on their pilgrimage; *now*, those that venture on the mountain to dig there, some of them are carried off with quick fevers or consumptions, some get cramps, rheumatisms and agues, and thence a ruined constitution, and just as few are seen regaining the way of their pilgrimage as ever.

You will mark the nearness of the Plain called Ease to the region of the mines with its temptations and its dangers. When the church has a long period of quiet and prosperity with the world, (and as we have noticed, this Plain in our day has become very wide), the habits of luxury and conformity to the world increase, and of course those habits being expensive, greater means are needed to keep them up. Pilgrims beginning to imitate the world and not to lead it, or to pass frugally through it, but beginning to settle by whole colonies in this Plain of Ease, have great want of money for themselves and their own households. If Ephraim mixes himself among the people, not to lead them to God, but to enjoy their pleasures, to copy their fashions, to strive with them in the pursuit of gain, and to rival them in luxury, then Ephraim must have money to support his own establishments. The house-rents in the Plain of Ease are very high; and whereas the Lord of the way has promised to those who keep steady on their pilgrimage a protection from its dangers, and a supply of all their wants, he has never made any such promise to those who settle in that Plain, so that they have to look out for themselves with

just as much eagerness and absorbedness of soul in the things of this world, as those who have no God to depend upon. They often have to look out for the bare costs of their living, with a great deal more difficulty than they could ever have endured had they kept straight on in their pilgrimage. And in many cases they form the plan of a permanent support for their children in that very same Plain of Ease, where they flattered themselves at first that they were only sojourning for a season ; and this requires an enormous capital, and their children, having no idea of going on pilgrimage, grow up from beginning to end, in habits of great expense and self-indulgence. So that those who will be rich in order to keep up their establishments in the Plain of Ease, besides the danger, and almost certainty of drowning themselves in destruction and perdition, are often put to the greatest and most painful shifts to get money.

God's promises to those who keep on, like Christian and Hopeful, in the way of their pilgrimage, are very sweet, plentiful and precious. He makes a covenant of care, his own kind care and love, both for themselves and their families. And one of the most experienced Pilgrims that ever journeyed and reached home, once said, I have been young, and now am old ; yet have I never seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread. It is true that the advice of another great Pilgrim, still more experienced, because under a dispensation of greater light, for those who go on pilgrimage, seems somewhat strict. "Having food and raiment, let us be therewith content." He does not command that a Pilgrim never have anything else, but he advises, and it is sweet and loving advice, that if we be reduced simply to that, food and raiment, we be quiet and content. And truly, a contented mind is better than great riches. And after all, what more than this allotment of Paul, with a contented mind, does any man really need on the way of his pilgrimage ? And if God secures this for

himself and his family, and heaven at the end, is he not an infinitely kind, gracious, and most indulgent God? Does any master ever give more than this, support by the way, and large wages when the work is done?

God says, Make you my service your delight, your wants shall be my care. Seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you. But on the other hand he says, If you stop in the Plain of Ease, you will have to take care of yourself; and if that becomes your supreme business, you are lost; if you seek this world for yourself, you will have to hire yourself out to the god of this world, and doing this, you will receive the wages of his services, and none other; and the wages of sin is death. Doing this, you will probably, in some shape or another, go digging in the mines, in order to gain the means of maintaining your support in the Plain of Ease. Your wants, your expenses, in the Plain of Ease, are incomparably greater than those on the way of your pilgrimage. Besides, they are wants for yourself, not for God, and so you go to the *mines* for yourself, not for him; and if that be the rule of your life, then you come under the dread, withering, but immutable law of selfishness, He that seeketh his life, shall lose it. Alas! a man had better be involved in the smoke, perplexities and terrors of the valley of the shadow of death, all his life-time, than be under such a law of life, such a despotism of death in life.

Oh, as we said before, if a man be not set free from self, he never can enjoy himself; and nothing but God's kind love, in Christ's blessed service, can possibly set him free. But, let him only throw himself on Christ, and by his grace set out on the way of this pilgrimage with great earnestness, let him get absorbed intently in Christ's service, and he will forget his own; and thus Christ sets him free, in making him so sweetly forgetful of self, and absorbed in Christ. All his service for self, is service for Christ. The law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus shall be felt through

his whole being, setting him free from the law of sin and of death. In general, it may be said that self is a dog or a wolf that keeps watch over you ; it is only by setting him at work for others, that you can escape from him yourself.

Now the Plain of Ease being so near the mines, and the King's highway running for a longer or shorter season through the Plain, it makes a great temptation for the Pilgrims that straggle variously, and do not keep narrowly in the way. But you will observe that the mines themselves are *out* of the way, even though the Plain of Ease was *in* the way. And it is the maxims and men of the world, and not the wants of our Pilgrimage, that call the Pilgrims' attention to the mines, and urge them to turn in thither. "Then I saw in my dream, that a little off the road, over against the silver mine, stood Demas, gentleman-like, to call to passengers to come and see ; who said to Christian and his fellow, Ho ! turn aside hither, and I will show you a thing." Well, certainly, the silver mine or the gold mine, whether the land be Lucre or Beulah, is always *a little off the road* ; the first temptations to it are *a little off the road* ; and here stood Demas, *a little off the road*, and the first word was, merely, Come and see ; no great evil in that, surely. No, certainly, none at all. The blessed creatures in heaven cry, Come and see, at God's wonders ; and the Angel of the Gospel on earth cries, Come and see. But when the god of this world imitates the voice, for his shows and lying wonders, it is a different thing. The world run to the door, run into the streets, but it is Death and hell following with him. Come and see, says Demas ; can there be any harm in that ? No ! but it is off the road, and while you look, you are *entering into temptation*, doing that against which our Lord directs you to pray earnestly, because it is the first step towards ruin. While you look, the cloud is around you, and the spirit of the wonder enters into you. It is as the deadly fascination

of the snake ; it holds you with its glittering eye, and you gaze till you become dizzy.

It is dangerous even to *contemplate* successful, sudden riches. While you look, you envy, you thirst. The very first temptation in Paradise was, Come and see. Eve looked at the mellow, tempting, golden fruit, and looked again, and was lost. The voice Come and see, is sometimes dangerous enough even in the very path of our Pilgrimage ; but off the road, beware. Our blessed Lord says the cares of life and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word. Surely there is nothing sinful in the cares of life ; no, certainly not, if you meet them with patience ; but if they choke the word, what then ? And riches, there is nothing evil in riches, unless got by wrong. No, but the *deceitfulness* of riches, their dominion over the heart, their idolatrous, absorbing power, that is the danger. And hasty riches are very different from riches gradually gained by honest industry. He that maketh *haste* to be rich shall not be innocent. Riches may increase, by God's providence, even in the way of this Pilgrimage ; but God's direction is, *if* they increase, set not your heart upon them. And Christ's memorable words are never to be forgotten, never *can* be forgotten : It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter into the kingdom of heaven.

Aye, says one, but our Lord explained his meaning when he said, How hard is it for them that *trust* in riches to enter into the kingdom of heaven. Very true. But why did he put it in the other form first, and not make the correction till the blank astonishment of his disciples at that saying induced him ? And indeed it was to their ears the most astounding incredible proposition they had ever heard from his lips. He put it in that blank, unexceptionable form, because in all ages it is the nature of riches to make men trust in them, and ninety-nine out of a hundred

do trust in them, and with all possible caution and good use they are very hazardous to a man's salvation.

But you may perhaps say again, Was not Joseph of Arimathea a rich man? And was not Zaccheus a rich man? And was not Philemon a rich man? And does not God give particular charges to rich men as Christians? And did not Peter and John both own houses in Jerusalem? And does not Paul say that if any man provideth not for his own he hath denied the faith and is worse than an infidel? And if we merchants were all to turn preachers, and let our business go at loose ends, where would be your monies for the Missionary Enterprise?

Well, that is all true. But did any of them, in disobedience of Christ's warning, lay up riches *for themselves*, setting their hearts upon them? Were they not all acting as God's stewards? And does not Paul charge them that are rich in this world that they be rich in good works, willing to communicate, that is, to give abundantly? It is very true that God nowhere forbids men to become rich, but he does forbid their becoming rich for themselves, for that is idolatry. We must have reservoirs of water; but for what? Are the reservoirs to keep the water for themselves? No, but to have it flow out as fast as it flows in. If it does not flow out, it becomes stagnant. And just so with wealth. If God permits it to accumulate, permits a man to become a reservoir of it, and a man undertakes to legislate over it for himself, and to keep it for himself, it is sure to stagnate; it breeds reptiles in the man's character, and the miserly surface shall cream and mantle with corruption.

In that creaming and mantling, a man may think that he sees nothing but gay and beautiful colors and flowers; theatres, operas, rich magnificent dresses and furniture, delicacies for the appetite, dinners with costly wines, masquerades, and dances, the lusts of the flesh, the pride of the eye and the pride of life; but if these are what floats up

for a man's worship out of the reservoir of his wealth, the most nauseous toad-stool of God's making on the surface of the mould of the forest, or any handful of the green slime upon a stagnant pond, were full of radiant beauty and worth in the comparison. Indeed it is a wrong done to any of God's things, though they were but leaves rotting by the roadside, to compare men's selfish passions to them; for the things that rot do it in obedience to God's laws, and there is a divine force in them that makes them rot, and they die to accomplish God's purposes. But the corruption of a man's passions, the activity of his animal and earthly propensities, in utmost self-gratification and indulgence, is the gangrene and death of his spiritual being. The turning of God's bounties into the mere kindling stuff and fuel of those fires that shall drive the man's soul, as a fierce engine of death, away from God, what is that? what name can be given to that?

A reservoir of wealth, or of any gifts that might be used for God, stolen from him, and put under lock and key for self, self-aggrandizement, self-indulgence, family-aggrandizement, worldly purposes, and things that perish in the using, is a fountain of guilt, and will be of misery to those who thus apply it. But let it flow forth as God intended, and it shall be pure, sweet, healthful, blessing both the giver and receiver. Let the stream of God's bounty, grace, and love flow into it and through it, and it shall never stagnate, but the bright, rippling, central current, that gives it motion and purpose, shall keep it ever fresh, pure, beautiful.

Moreover, that current is a self-regulating power for the ebb and flow of the whole reservoir. The measures of a man's charities, since Christ Jesus, the Incarnation and Example of divine benevolence came into the world, are not determined by legal calculation and appointment, but are the work of willing, sanctified affections. Every man as he findeth in his heart, and as God hath prospered him, so let him give, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus,

how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. The greatest prosperity that a man can have from God is the gift of *a heart that loves to give*. Under the old Dispensation almost everything was ordered by law ; but what God began by law he carries on and perfects by grace. Whereas under the old legal Dispensation it was a law to give the tenth part of one's income to the Lord, under the new dispensation all giving was a voluntary thing. And certainly God ought to get more by grace than he does by law, though whether it be so or not, in particular cases, we cannot tell. But in truth by grace he gets, or will get, all ; for grace shall conquer all ; and so a man who, like the old Pharisee, gave tithes of all that he possessed, and then rested on that as a legal justification, did, on becoming a Christian, give all to God, to be used for him, as his steward, instead of merely giving a legal part, and then saying, all the rest is mine. It is manifest that a man who had complied strictly with the terms of the law, in giving his tithes, might be just as covetous as ever in regard to all the rest ; but a man under grace has the covetousness itself broken up, and feels that all is the Lord's, and only lent to himself for a little season, to use for the Lord, and do good with as he has opportunity, do good by voluntary gifts, gifts by grace, not mere law. Every man cheerfully, according as God hath prospered him, for God loveth a cheerful giver. It is one of the very remarkable things in the change from the old dispensation to the new, that whereas the tithe law of benevolence was abolished, the law of a tenth part of every one's property devoted to God, no new law was put in its place. It was because God was then setting up the voluntary system, and would carry everything by grace, and heartfelt, cheerful, happy love.

Now let us compare with this view, a few passages in God's Word intimately connected with it. It is of great importance that we have, as far as possible, a comparison of

all the sides of our subject, as presented in God's wisdom. "Concerning the works of men, by the word of thy lips I have kept me from the paths of the Destroyer."

The first passage shall be from the Epistle to the Ephesians. "Let him that stole steal no more, but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, *that he may have to give to him that needeth.*" Note, in this passage, the reason by which the habit of honest industry is enforced upon the man, namely, that instead of being under the necessity of demanding help, *he may have to give to him that needeth.* The second shall be from the Epistle to the Thessalonians. "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you ; that ye may walk honestly towards them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.—For even when we were with you, this we commanded you, that if any would not work, neither should he eat. For we hear that there are some which walk among you disorderly, working not at all, but are busy-bodies. Now them that are such we command and exhort by our Lord Jesus Christ that with quietness they work, and eat their own bread." "But if any provide not for his own," continues the apostle to Timothy, "and especially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." In the Epistle to the Romans he commands that we owe no man anything, but to love one another, and that we be not slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. To the same general purport the injunction in Titus is given to all Christians, that they learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful ; a passage which is supposed to enjoin a constant diligence in business for the purpose of a systematic benevolence.

A man will not fail to note here the practical wisdom and beauty of Christianity, and the unparalleled loftiness of its motives, as revealed in these passages. The main

argument by which an industrious attention to business is urged upon men, is that they may themselves possess the ability and exercise the habit, and enjoy the happiness of giving to those who have need. There are no extremes here, no impracticable separations between a man's business and his piety; but his business is to be pursued as a part and for the sake of his piety. You are not commanded to turn aside from the pursuits of this world, to renounce them, and to go about preaching or praying as your only business; but you are to serve God in your own calling, and to pursue that industriously as a part of your religion. You are to trust in God, but you are to help yourself. You are to labor for your own support and that of your family. And you are to do this, not to gain a mere support for them and yourself, but to be able also, if need be, to supply the wants of others. You are to work with all your energy, in an honest way, for an honest competence. You are to do this, not only that you may not be compelled to tax the charity of others for your support, but that you may have a surplus to give to the needy. If, after you have done your uttermost, trusting in God to gain your own livelihood, and also the ability to give to others, you are still poor, it is not your fault. God's discipline is upon you. But poverty is sin, if you are not using your utmost honest diligence to avoid it.

Furthermore, one cannot but mark here *the honorable-ness of labor*, manual labor, in the Bible. Whatever system of slavery there might have been then in existence, it was not one that made industry and labor dishonorable. That infamous degradation, or power of degradation, was reserved for the system of modern times. Paul himself has been marked as one of the most perfect gentlemen the world ever saw, but he labored, working with his own hands. He gained his livelihood by manual labor. Your professed gentlemen who refuse this, when necessary, or regard it as dishonorable, or not respectable, deeming idle-

ness a characteristic of gentility, are stamped by Paul, singularly enough, as *busy-bodies*, working not at all; *dishonorably busy*, but not honorably working. The praise of *labor* in God's Word, the honor put upon every employment of honest industry, and the striking down of all distinctions between rich and poor, except those of goodness, are characteristics of a divine revelation.

But if you are commanded to be diligent in business, you are to do it always *as serving the Lord*. In all things you must have God and your duty to him in view, and that redeems every pursuit from selfishness and earthliness, and dignifies every act of life, every labor of society, with the beauty of religion. The law of true piety is that you pursue your honest callings in obedience to God, and whatever you do, do it as to him. There is no necessary act or employment so poor and low, as not to come within not merely the possibility, but the obligation of this rule; no position in life so obscure or painful, that may not, throughout, be irradiated with celestial light.

Teach me, my God and King,
In all things thee to see;
And what I do in anything
To do it as for thee.

All may of thee partake:
Nothing can be so mean
Which with this tincture, *For thy sake*,
Will not grow bright and clean.

A servant with this clause
Makes drudgery divine;
Who sweeps a room, as for God's laws,
Makes that and the action fine.

All these texts and principles lead us to the grand principle of love recorded by Paul in that sweet remembered declaration of Christ, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." And this is a declaration from the very depths of heaven, and carries the spirit and the happiness of heaven with it.

For it is entirely true that when we are exercising ourselves in habits of benevolence, when we are thus, under God's grace, building up a giving and compassionate nature, we are, if I may dare so to speak, just helping God to conquer and destroy that which keeps us out of heaven, our own selfishness. And after the example of Paul, I think we *may* dare so to speak, for he represents Christians as being, in this work, fellow-workers with God, according to God's working. When a man of wealth, amidst all the great dangers and temptations with which he is surrounded, steadily pursues his path for God, and forms, under God's grace, the rule of large giving according to his large means, he is anchoring himself in God and heaven; he is just fastening safety-drags on that immortal soul of his, which, laden by the god of this world with the stuff of this world, was fiercely rushing down an inclined plane to ruin. Everything that he throws out for God and his fellow-beings, has a grappling-iron that holds fast, and checks his progress. Let him continue to give, till his heart has formed the *habit* of giving, till by God's grace he can begin to be able to say from his own experience, It is more blessed so give than to receive; and although the god of this world thinks he is sure of his destruction on this inclined plane, yet he shall come to the bottom safe. It is a blessed discipline for the soul, that of giving. A man thinks he is doing good to others, but he is doing infinitely the most good to himself. In the barest literal reality of things, it is more blessed to give than to receive. Take the miserable theory of mere utilitarianism, which is the very lowest point to which man or devil can get down in theory-making; go upon the material dry goods traffic, of *quid pro quo*, and every man who truly *gives*, receives infinitely *more* than he gives.

Even leaving out of view the heavenliness, the divine beatitude and celestial state of the affections in the act of giving, which makes it positively, and at present, and with-

out any regard to results or consequences, a sweeter, more delightful, more blessed exercise to give than to receive, that being the very triumph of love, the very spirit of heaven to realize this ; leaving that all out of view, and speaking only of the *effect* of giving, as a discipline upon the soul of the giver, and of the compound interest of profit which is sure to return to him from his gift, it is more *profitable* to give than to receive ; a man lays up more by giving than he does by receiving. There is that giveth and yet increaseth ; here is that arithmetic, not figures of speech, but figures of realities, by which it is demonstrable that the more a man gives, the more he has, the richer he is. It is *better* for him to give than it is to receive. You cannot make a selfish world or heart believe this, because selfishness cannot understand, feel, believe, the higher, heavenly, absolute ground, on which eternally it is true that it is more *blessed* to give than to receive. It is the province of creatures to receive ; God only can be said absolutely to give ; it is God's prerogative to give, man's only to receive. Therefore, every man who truly gives becomes like God. The exercise of giving is blessed because it is God's exercise. The man who loves, blesses, gives, is the child of his Father in heaven ; and it is from the very heart of Incarnate Love, of God Incarnate, that this divine utterance comes, not in reference to results, rewards, or consequences, but in present and eternal reality and absolutism. It is more blessed to give than to receive. When a man can repeat that utterance from the heart, he is a changed man, a regenerated man, a new creature. Heaven is begun in him ; he is a *saved* man, for Christ is formed in him the hope of glory, and it is from Christ's grace, Christ's teachings, that he learned that utterance.

Now in regard to all heavenly utterances it is true that our learning of them, our ability to repeat them, begins with lame, imperfect efforts. We first command only single letters, then we read words of one, then of two,

then of three syllables, till at length the whole sentence pours forth from the triumph of grace in the heart, like a whole anthem from a mighty church organ. This is the way we learn the exercise of heavenly love, and come to say from experience, It is more blessed to give than to receive. Perhaps many acts of mere duty in giving, many mere obediences to the conscience, almost out of the bondage of fear, will have to be performed, before the words of this great utterance can be spelled out as angels read them. Before it can be repeated *by heart*, there will have to be many *attempts* at repetition, as a lesson. And every man should be at work upon this lesson, every rich man especially. Poor men seem to learn it more easily, and alas, often unlearn it, in a measure, in proportion as they grow rich. A rich man is under God's own training, when he is learning this lesson; indeed rich or poor, that is the case. It is the lesson of heaven that we all must learn, if we would ever be happy, the lesson of self-denying love.

But now let us see what was done with Demas' invitation. It is rather a singular station that Bunyan has given to this gentleman, who, you are aware, was at one time one of Paul's companions and fellow-laborers; but here we find him acting as the overseer of this silver mine. A very courteous, fine-spoken, gentlemanly man, inviting the Pilgrims to come and see. We can see Demas, if we cannot see the mines. Some may think Bunyan has dealt hardly with Demas, in placing him here; but Paul is very clear. *Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world.* Most likely, the dangers that were then thickening around Paul, in the work of the ministry, acting conjointly with some tempting offer of advantage in business, drew Demas away, and we see him no more, till we meet him here at the mouth of this mine, calling to the Pilgrims, Ho, turn aside hither, and I will show you a thing. If Demas still kept his profession of Christianity, we suppose the god of this world was very glad to get a professor of

religion to act in this capacity in the mining speculation. It gave increased dignity and respectability to the whole thing, and doubtless there were many professors of religion in the plain of Ease well acquainted with Demas, and who had made investments in the mines, and committed the main care of their stocks to him. He was a gentlemanly man at any rate. But then he had to say, *Turn aside hither*; and of that word *Turn aside* Christian just now was very fearful; and before he had gone much farther on his pilgrimage he wished he had all the way continued as fearful. Now he is on his guard.

What thing, says Christian, so deserving as to turn us out of the way?

Why, says Demas, here is a silver mine, and some digging in it for treasure; if you will come, with a little pains you may richly provide for yourselves. It is open to every one, no tax, no monopoly, and nothing to do but dig. Now the youngest of the Pilgrims was somewhat tempted at this offer. He thought they might at least go and examine the ground; he had just then forgotten the words, Pray that ye enter not into temptation. Then said Hopeful, let us go and see. If Hopeful had been alone in the pilgrimage, he had gone; but two are better than one; and the Lord of the way kept him from destruction by means of his fellow-pilgrim. Not I, said Christian, I have heard of this place before now, and how many have there been slain; and besides, that treasure is a snare to those that seek it; for it hindereth them in their pilgrimage. Then Christian called to Demas, saying, Is not the way dangerous? hath it not hindered many in their pilgrimage?

Then answered Demas, Not very dangerous, except to those that are careless. But withal he blushed as he spoke. Not *very* dangerous. Demas could not make up his mind to say, Not at all. Even those whose souls are most absorbed with wealth are perfectly willing to admit that the pursuit of it is full of danger, but then so is everything,

they say, and a man must take care of himself. But Demas knew something from experience, which he did not care to tell.

Now these men, Money-love, By-ends, Save-all, and Hold-the-world, were but a little distance behind Christian and Hopeful. I will warrant you, said Hopeful, when By-ends comes up, if he hath the same invitation as we, he will turn in thither to see. No doubt thereof, said Christian, for his principles lead him that way, and a hundred to one but he dies there. Then Demas called again, But will you not come over and see? Then Christian finished the matter with great decision for himself and Hopeful, and roundly answered, saying, Demas, thou art an enemy to the right ways of the Lord of this way, and hast been already condemned for thine own turning aside, by one of his Majesty's Judges; and why seekest thou to bring us into the like condemnation? Besides, if we at all turn aside, our Lord the King will certainly hear thereof, and will there put us to shame, where we would stand with boldness before him. Then Demas cried again that he was also one of their fraternity, and that if they would tarry a little, he also himself would walk with them. He still held to his profession of the Christian, and, mistaken man, perhaps to the hope. Then said Christian, What is thy name? is it not the same by the which I have called thee? Yes, said Demas, my name is Demas, I am the son of Abraham. I know you, said Christian; Gehazi was your great grandfather, and Judas your father, and you have trod in their steps; it is but a devilish prank that thou usest; thy father was hanged for a traitor, and thou deservest no better reward. Assure thyself that when we come to the King, we will do him word of this thy behavior. This was plain dealing, but Christian was always plain, and he thought the case deserved severity, as it surely did. And so they went their way.

They were safe, by God's grace, from this temptation;

they had not *entered into it*. They had passed through all the allurements of the Plain of Ease; the spirit of the temptations there had not entered into *them*; and when they came to the mines, they did not *enter into temptation*, they did not go and see. They were kept from breaking the hedge, and the hedge kept them.

But now, victorious Pilgrims, be not high-minded, but fear. It remains to be seen whether, if you forget your dependence on the Lord Jesus, and his commands, though you have now resisted a temptation that has overcome By-ends and his companions, you will not yourselves be found entering into, and overcome by a smaller temptation even than that by which they were ruined. Let him that standeth, take heed lest he fall.



PART II.

GOING TO SEE, AND ENTERING IN.

By this time By-ends and his companions were come again within sight, and they at the first beck went over to Demas. Now whether they fell into the pit by looking over the brink thereof, or whether they went down to dig, or whether they were smothered in the bottom by the damps that commonly arise, of these things I am not certain; but this I observed, that they never were seen again in the way. It was not likely that they would be. And this whole chapter of the Pilgrimage is a very solemn comment on those verses in Paul, "They that will be rich fall into temptation, and a snare, and into many foolish and hurtful lusts, which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

They that *will* be rich, supremely determined upon that, they are always in haste to be rich ; and God's law in this world, and we are inclined to think in all worlds, is just this : nothing truly good in haste. It is a marvellous off-shoot of God's great plan for redeeming our world, that things are so constituted, in spite of all the art and power of Satan, that ordinarily men cannot get rich in a moment. If Satan *could* make sudden riches the rule of his administration as god of this world, if our great God and Saviour permitted *that*, very few souls would ever be converted and saved. There is an ingredient in sudden riches, of a searching, poisonous, subtle power, that very few constitutions are proof against.

The stress is laid in Scripture on the *thirst* for wealth and on *hasty* wealth. He that *maketh haste* to be rich, God says, shall not be innocent. This declaration, by him that knoweth our hearts, is exceedingly solemn ; and by how many affecting and solemn instances in every age is it sustained ! But apart from direct crime, the effect of sudden wealth upon the character is disastrous. Generally men become rich by hard labor ; it may not be by manual labor, though it may have been begun with that, founded in that. More ordinarily, it is the work of all the faculties, both of mind and body. It is energy and solidity in some estimable qualities inwrought into habit. It is attention to the tides of affairs, enterprise, good judgment, method, accuracy, careful reckoning, devotion to business and not to pleasure, knowledge of men, the wise selection of markets, a quick sight of reality and discernment of falsehood, the seizure of what is practicable amidst a mass of propositions or possibilities. It is the wise adjustment of plans, and energy in the pursuit of them. It is the knowing where to stop, as well as when and where to set out. Immethodical and careless men cannot be wealthy ; theatre-goers and pleasure-seekers cannot be wealthy. Your merchants will not even have a clerk who runs after the plays,

and is the companion of actors and actresses. Men become rich by habits of self-restraint and industry. And men who acquire money in this gradual and indefatigable way, are all the while surrounded by influences that tend much to check and contradict the inordinate passion for wealth, or at least prevent it from becoming the insane greed of the miser. They have innumerable calls upon their generosity and charity; they have courtesies to exercise one towards another; they meet with losses to balance, and hold in, the passion of avarice. They have the cares of their families, the education of their children, the calls and duties of social and civil life all pressing upon them; and they constantly encounter events to teach them their dependence upon God, and to make them feel, if they will heed the lesson, the danger of trusting in uncertain riches. All this constitutes a discipline, which may very much keep down and restrain, though it cannot cure, the ruling evil of a man's nature. It holds his passions in check, and gives opportunity for other things to grow besides evil.

On the other hand, riches that are gotten *not* by the exercise of superior faculties, *not* by patience, energy, enterprise and industry, but by gambling, by hazardous and lucky speculation, by sudden windfalls, or by hasty adventures not unmingled with fraud, are very different in their effect upon the character. They tend to uproot all principle; they throw a man afloat, instead of fastening him. They overset or intoxicate the mind, not satisfy it. They rather kindle the passions, instead of disciplining or restraining them. Few men can bear a sudden accession of great prosperity of any kind. You could throw a five pound weight of small shot at a man, one by one, with your whole force, and not hurt him, though you should strike him in the head with every one of them; but hit him with a single piece of iron of the same weight, and you will kill him.

Moreover there is a great difference between seeking

wealth in the long run, by a wise interchange of the great commodities of cities and nations, by buying and selling, by manufacturing and trading, and the thousand appliances of a world-wide commerce, and seeking the images and representatives of wealth directly, the yellow gold itself. The other may be an undue chronic excitement, but this last is truly the yellow fever. There is as great a difference as Carlyle makes between a sincere pagan idolatry, that ignorantly worships God under the form of idols, and an insincere, lying, hypocritical idolatry, like that which the idolatrous Jews took up, when they knew better, worshipping the idols themselves. When it comes to the real worship of idols, instead of the things which the idols represent, it is the uttermost depth of human degradation. And just so the miserly worship of yellow gold is the basest of passions. Place a man in a position in which, by a few years' honest and dilligent application of his faculties, he will be sure of a fortune, and you are, in fact, running him in a mould of character, which *may* be very favorable to goodness, which certainly does not exclude it, but in which, availing himself of the grace of God, he may make almost anything of himself that he pleases. Place a man at the mouth of a gold mine, with a shovel and pick-axe, and we do not think you see any immediate discipline of goodness or prospect of virtue there. His frame will tremble with the excitement of pure avarice, and as he digs, digs, digs, the yellow dirt itself, if he be not unnaturally careful, gets the fascination of a snake over him. He is very much in danger either of becoming a miser or a spendthrift, of going to one extreme or the other. There is no hunger that is so intense, so biting, as that after gold in the form of gold. The miser would eat and drink his gold, if he could. A sort of metallic poison seems to get into his veins, into his heart. There is great danger in this.

But all this danger Christian and Hopeful escaped, and

with comparatively great ease. They were very decided. Then said Christian to Hopeful, Let us not stir a step, but still keep on our way. This was good advice and determination, and it needed no second word to Hopeful to set him right, for he confided greatly in the knowledge and Christian experience of his brother, and was willing to be guided by him, and so they went on their way. So they were past that danger, by the grace of God. But there was another before them, and Christian perhaps began already to be a little sensible of his own superiority and great growth in grace, a thing which generally goes before a fall. Moreover Christians are not always the same; and a man who is strong one day against a particular temptation, will be overcome, it may be, another day, if he is at all self-relying or off his guard, by another, even though the last be weaker than the first. It was but a little space after this in their pilgrimage, a few days and nights of delightful travelling along the River of Life, which here ran sweetly by the wayside, that they came to a rough place of road, and By-path Meadow beside it. Now who would have thought that this same Christian, who was so bold and determined against the mine, especially against the very idea of turning out of the way to see it, and who had almost chided Hopeful, as Hopeful did himself, for having entertained such a thought, that this same Christian, on a much less temptation would be the first to propose going out of the way for the sake of ease, and the one to advise and lead Hopeful out of the way. They had both come safely and faithfully all the way across the Plain of Ease, and past the gold region, without either stopping or turning aside. But now they begin to be troubled at the weariness of the way, and Christian looks wishfully over into the meadow, and without entering into any consultation with Hopeful as to the lawfulness of his thought, suddenly says to him, If this meadow lieth along by our way-side, let's go over into it. They had both been walking along in silence, per-

haps with the same thought, but we do not think Hopeful would have given it utterance, if Christian had not begun. However, Christian waited for nothing, but went to the stile to see ; he that had been so dead set against turning out of the way even to look at the mine ; and behold a path lay along by the way on the other side of the fence.

'Tis according to my wish, said Christian, here is the easiest going ; come, good Hopeful, and let us go over. Christian has forgotten, now, his own sermon a few days ago on the danger and sinfulness of turning aside to see, and he would now go straight over. And now it is Hopeful that puts in a warning. But how, said Hopeful, if this path should lead us out of the way ? That's not likely, said Christian ; look, doth it not go along by the way-side ? And now, as before Hopeful yielded to Christian's warnings *not* to go, he now yields to his persuasions to go ; the example and advice of the older and more experienced Christian has as much power against the right way, as it had before for it. So Hopeful being persuaded by his fellow, went after him over the stile. When they were gone over, and were got into the path, they found it very easy to their feet ; and withal, they, looking before them, espied a man walking as they did, and his name was Vain Confidence ; so they called after him, and asked him whither that way led. He said to the Celestial Gate. Curious ! to see how, instantly, as soon as the Pilgrims begin to turn from the right way, they ask about it of those who are walking with them or before them, and not of the Lord of the way. And then the confidence of Vain Confidence ! To the Celestial Gate, to be sure ; am not I going that way myself, and should I be wrong ? Look, said Christian to Hopeful, did not I tell you so ? by this you may see we are right. So the echo of a man's own evil or questionable word or thought saith, Hear what a multitude of voices ; we are surely right. So they followed, and he went before them. But behold the night came on, and it grew very dark ; so that they that

were behind lost the sight of him that went before. O how soon it grows dark when we leave God's word, and run after our own ease, when we leave God's way and run after our own way! Dark indeed! It is a dread darkness now settling down over Christian and Hopeful. And you see here how much more easily a man may be tempted aside from the path of duty by the suggestions of his own self-seeking heart, than by external temptations when he is somewhat on his guard against them. If a man by the way-side should invite you in ever so gentlemanly a way to do a thing against conscience, you would repel the temptation, knowing that he as well as yourself is aware of the evil. But go a little farther, and let self or the love of ease present some out-of-the-way gratification, and you will perhaps not only go yourself to the stile to see, but at once you will climb over and perhaps persuade others to do likewise. The temptations which Satan presents in our own hearts are sometimes more dangerous than all others.

You may see how the heart deceives itself, by just turning back to the brave conversation of these Christians in the joy of their victory over their former temptation and their escape from that danger, and comparing it with their conduct now in getting over the stile. Just after they had come safe off from Demas and the mines, they passed a strange fearful-looking old monument, which they at length discovered to be the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was changed, because she looked back with a covetous heart when the angels were fleeing with her from Sodom. Ah, my brother, said Christian, this is a seasonable sight after the invitation of Demas to come over and view the Hill Lucre; and had we gone over, as he desired us, and as thou my brother wast inclining to do, we had, for aught I know, been made ourselves a spectacle for those that shall come after to behold. Hopeful's ingenuous confession is beautiful. I am sorry, said he, that I was so foolish, and am made to wonder that I am not now as Lot's wife; for

wherein was the difference betwixt her sin and mine ? She only looked back, and I had a desire to go see. Let grace be adored, and let me be ashamed that ever such a thing should be in my heart. Then said Christian, let us take notice of what we see here, for our help for time to come. This woman escaped one judgment, for she fell not by the destruction of Sodom ; yet she was destroyed by another, as we see she is turned into a pillar of salt. True, said Hopeful, and she may be to us both caution and example ; caution that we should shun her sin, or a sign of what judgment will overtake such as shall not be prevented by this caution. But above all I muse at one thing, to wit, how Demas and his fellows can stand so confidently yonder to look for that treasure, which this woman for looking behind her after (for we read not that she stept one foot out of the way) was turned into a pillar of salt ; specially since the judgment that overtook her, did make her an example within sight of where they are ; for they cannot choose but see her, did they but lift up their eyes.

It is a thing to be wondered at, said Christian, and it argueth that their heart is grown desperate in that case. And it is most rationally to be concluded that such as sin in the sight, yea and in despite of such examples as are set continually before them to caution them to the contrary, must be partakers of severest judgments.—Doubtless, said Hopeful, thou hast spoken the truth ; but what a mercy is it that neither thou, but especially I, am not made myself this example ! This ministereth occasion to us to thank God, to fear before him, and always to remember Lot's wife.

Yes ! but how soon they themselves forget all this ! And what a picture is this of the heart's unsuspected deceitfulness and power of self-delusion. A few days afterwards, under the power of temptation, they themselves forgot all this ; Christian, the experienced man, led the way over the stile, and they entered into Giant Despair's Castle. “ Ex-

perience, like the stern lights of a ship, only serves to illumine the path that has been passed over."

My brethren, says James, count it all joy, when ye fall into divers temptations ! A singular congratulation truly ! It would have come like vinegar upon nitre to poor Christian and Hopeful, that terrible night of their distress amidst storm and darkness. And yet, it had been all joy if they had passed that stile of temptation without going over it, according to their "brave" conversation about Lot's wife. James does not say, Count it all joy when ye *enter into* temptation. Entering into temptations is a very different thing from falling into them by the providence of God for faith's trial. Blessed is the man that *endureth* temptation, says James, and the *endurance* is supposed in the first text, where we are to count the meeting of temptations all joy. Be it that in that case the temptations mainly mean *trials*, and not allurements to sin ; yet even temptations to wander from God are blessings, *if resisted*, for they issue in greater grace and firmness. But the *entering into* temptation is a very different thing, as different as Christian's going to the stile and getting over was different from Demas' calling to him out of the way, and being refused.

The endurance of temptation is good for two things, for the discovery of the wickedness there is in ourselves, and the grace there is in our Saviour. We do not know how to value Christ aright, till we find how sinful we are ourselves ; and we do not learn to rest upon Christ's strength, till we find we have none of our own but weakness. If we did not see and feel our own sinfulness and wretchedness, we should not feel his preciousness at all ; and so, if God kept us from all circumstances and conjunctions, which would bring out our sins, and disclose the hidden evils of our hearts, we might go on with a fair form of piety, and without falling into any particular snares, be all the while going further and further from Christ, and becoming more and more ignorant both of him and of ourselves.

“Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation.” “Lead us not into temptation.” The prayer is not, Let us not be tempted, suffer us not to endure temptations; but, Let us not *enter into* temptation. There is something very emphatic in those words *enter into*. A man may be exposed to temptation, and by the grace of God come off victorious, and be the stronger for the temptation, if he resists it promptly, if he flies trembling to Christ. But if he dallies with it, if he dwells upon its circumstances, if he is not watching and praying, if he undertakes to see how far he may go in it without falling, if he but half rejects it, and half entertains it, then he is *entering into* temptation, then he is in fearful danger. He is entering into it as in a cloud, surrounded by which he ceases to behold eternal realities, or sees them so dimly, as not to feel their force. And the deeper he enters into it, the farther he is from God. It is a stupefying as well as a darkening cloud, an atmosphere that paralyzes the spiritual energies. Let a man once *enter into* temptation, and Satan has great power over him. Let a man play the part of Parley the Porter, and the foes of his soul are soon within the citadel. It is a Latin maxim of great wisdom in regard to evil habits, *Obsta principiis—resist the beginnings*; and this is of infinite importance in regard to temptation. Resist it wholly at once, take not a step upon its borders, enter not into it at all, but turn from it with supreme decision. Go not up to the stile to look over, and see how inviting the enclosure, for when you do this you are entering into temptation, your next step will probably be over the stile, and there, while you think you are keeping in sight of the King’s highway, and can return to it in a moment, you may wander from it fatally, and, almost before you are aware, find yourself fast locked in Giant Despair’s Castle. The temptation to neglect prayer is one of those temptations in the Christian life, which, if a man gives way to it, opens the door to all other temptations. So our blessed

Lord says watch and pray, and watch unto prayer, for while that is done, the door of other temptations is shut, the soul neither enters into them, nor they into the soul. But if prayer be neglected, the soul is in an exposed condition, ready to be overcome even by slight temptations.

In that very beautiful and instructive allegory by Hannah Moore, entitled *Parley the Porter*, there is mention made of a pleasant garden surrounding the Castle, which had been committed by the Lord to his servants to keep, and a thick hedge separating this garden from the wilderness, which was infested by robbers. The master of the Castle charged his servants in his absence always to keep within these limits; and he told them that they would consult their own safety and happiness, as well as show their love to him, by not even venturing over to the extremity of their bounds; for that he who goes as far as he dares, always shows a wish to go farther than he ought, and commonly does so. So it was found that the nearer these servants kept to the castle, and the farther from the *hedge*, the more ugly the wilderness appeared. But the nearer they approached the forbidden bounds, their own home appeared more dull, and the wilderness more delightful. And this the master knew when he gave his orders, for he never did or said anything without a good reason. And when his servants sometimes desired an explanation of the reason, he used to tell them they would understand it when they came to *the other house*; for it was one of the pleasures of that house, that it would explain all the mysteries of this, and any little obscurities in the master's conduct would then be made quite plain.

Thus it is, that the nearer we keep to God, and the farther from sin and temptation, the more delightful is the life of holiness and the more hateful does sin appear. But when we venture near the hedge, and endeavor at first to peep over it, and then begin to open it, taking off at first a handful of leaves, then a little sprig, then a bough or two,

we are entering into temptation, and holiness seems difficult, and sin more and more tempting. Every glance that is taken through the broken hedge makes the thoughts of the master's castle more irksome, and increases the desire to get out into the wilderness. The only way to deal safely with temptations is *not to enter into* them, but to keep them as much as possible at a distance, and to keep as far as possible even from the hedge. Temptations to sin are very different from trials and afflictions for the removal of sin. We ought not to be too much afraid of these last, but we cannot well be too much afraid of the first.

THE LAKE AMONG THE MOUNTAINS.

A CHILD'S LETTER AND LESSON.

THERE was once a little stream among the mountains, so small that it was lost in the first sand-bed across which it attempted to make its way. But God designed to make of this rill a great, wide, beautiful lake, that might, if need be, remain to all time, majestic and glorious. Whereupon he hedged the rill about with high restraints, and threw across it an impenetrable barrier of mountains. Thus disciplined, it grew upon itself, and rose and expanded, till in process of time it did indeed become a deep, majestic water, into which the cliffs looked down with wonder, to see themselves and the heavens so perfectly reflected, crystal clear.

But now the lake grew proud, and said within itself and to itself, I am too much shut up and confined. The restraint upon me is unworthy of so great a body, unworthy of a free state. I ought to have scope to exercise my sovereign will, and be governed by it. Besides, why shut myself up in this basin, when I am worthy to spread all over the world? So grand a creature as I am ought not to be restricted within such narrow limits, but to go roaming, and admired in every continent. I will be free.

Now, the silly lake did not consider for a moment, did not even once think, that that very imprisonment was the cause of all its greatness and all its beauty; and all its usefulness too, so that ten thousand Croton aqueducts might have been carried from it, if need be, to ten thousand cities; and, indeed, a beautiful river ran from it continually. Moreover, it forgot its origin, so weak and low, forgot

the time when it was like an infant in the cradle, and would have been lost in getting across the first sand-bank. It had grown up, only because God had restrained it, and now it had got so large, that it threw off all humility, all thoughts of subjection, and became boisterous and proud.

But pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall, as we shall see. The lake brooded upon these wicked thoughts, till at length it lost all patience and self-control, and began to beat madly against the mountain ramparts, that hemmed it in, and preserved it in power and beauty. For some time its efforts were all ineffectual; the mountains remained steady at their post, and the overhanging cliffs looked down in amazement to see the calm and beautiful lake so ruffled and distorted, lashing itself into such vain fury. But when there is an evil will, there is always an evil way. A desire after sin within us, always finds tempting occasions without us.

There were certain persons envious of the great, beautiful lake, because it was not in the dominions of their own State; and at the same time that these evil passions and causes of ruin were working within, they laid a plan to destroy all its greatness, from without. They began to undermine the mountain barrier, and succeeded in producing a great avalanche from without, so that the swelling and pressing of the lake from within began to produce some impression. At length, one dark night, when a dreadful storm was raging, the lake burst impetuously through, and thundered down into the valley, carrying terrific devastation in its course. The next morning there was nothing to be seen of it but a bed of sand where it formerly rested, and a long pathway of ruins—rocks, sand and gravel—where it rushed away. It had gained its freedom, but it had destroyed itself; it had burst through all restraint, but in doing so, it had sacrificed the causes of its beauty, its grandeur, its life. It was all gone and perished.

Now, my dear little children, and you ye large children

with straps to your pantaloons, listen to the moral of my story. It has two applications : the first, to every one of us as individuals ; and the second, to our country. Let no man think that true freedom consists in deliverance from all restraint. Let every man think, that in order to be good and great, he must be restrained and hemmed in on every side. The providence and the word of God must encircle and confine him. If he wishes to do great good to the world, let him be assured that the lake of his good intentions must be confined by the word of God, and that if he bursts this barrier, the cataract of his benevolence will only cover the earth ten feet deep with mud and ruin, and in the end will come to nothing.

If he wishes to be very large and free, let him remember that it is nothing but the truth can make him free, and that it was a great king who said, "I will run in the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart." A large heart keeps confined within God's commandments, and that is the only way in which it can be made and kept large ; and then a perennial stream of goodness runs from it. If he chafes at the barrier, let him remember that without it he would be lost in the first sand-bank. If he is disposed to be proud of his greatness, let him remember that it is only God who has built him up and can keep him. And, at all hazards, let him keep within the word of God.

I have elsewhere said that the human mind is like a boy's kite, needing to be confined if it would steadily soar. So the human reason must be tied to the word of God, or it cannot fly. My dear little child, did you ever see the boys playing with a kite ? Many of the large children, to whom I am speaking, have played with kites themselves, when they were not much larger than you are, when they were no bigger than the rill that grew into a lake. Did you ever see a little boy's paper kite in the air when the string broke—how it began to waver, and go sidelong, and then plunged head foremost to the ground ? Just so it

is with the human reason, when it casts loose from God's word. Down it comes to the ground, just like a broken balloon, and woe to him that trusted in it. He thought he was going up to the third heavens, but ten to one it will land him in some wild marsh, where he will never find his way out, or a thousand miles at sea, where he will struggle on and be drowned. I know many men, who have gone up in the balloon, and come down in the mud.

The second application of the bursting of the lake is to our country ; and you, my dear little child, young as you are, are enough of a politician to know that our country cannot be great and happy unless in obedience to God's word. They that are our enemies, would undermine our freedom and happiness by destroying the Sabbath, and casting off the authority of God's word, so that they may make a breach in the great barrier of divine truth that protects our institutions. And if they should succeed in doing this, then it would be very easy for wicked demagogues and infidels to raise such an internal proud storm, that the mountains would give way, and our great and beautiful lake of liberty and happiness would go to destruction.

When we were a little rill, and God threw such kind restraints around us, to make us a broad, deep lake, then we were keepers at home, and waited on Providence. But now we begin to think the Divine Providence and word too narrow and strait to confine our mighty genius, and some talk as if we had a mission, having begun with Mexico, to extend the area of freedom all round the world, taking Cuba first by the way. But our mission is, simply, to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God, and we had better see to it that all our people at home, black and white, enjoy real liberty, before we undertake to extend the area of freedom.

But I find my letter is getting long ; and having performed my promise, and more, by giving you both a story and a sermon, I shall bid you good-bye.

THE WISDOM OF ANIMALS.

A FABLE AFTER THE MANNER OF ÆSOP.

THERE was once upon a time a great union proposed of all the beasts against their enemies. The Lion and the Tiger, the Elephant and the Rhinoceros, the Camel, the Dromedary and the Hippopotamus, the Horse and the Ox, the Cat, the Fox, the Wolf, the Sheep, the Dog, all came in convention to discuss the matter. They agreed to lay aside their antagonistic propensities against one another, to respect each other's rights, to live in peace among themselves, and to unite in a common defence of the animal republic. Things were in this happy state, when a Hyena got up in the assembly, and stated that the race of Hyenas was made before any other beasts had an existence, and that the lordship over all the beasts was so committed to that race, that no beast could be considered as belonging to the animal republic, except under that lordship. This was a very bold and arrogant speech, but the Hyena stated that all antiquity was in his favor.

It were vain to attempt to describe the angry discussion to which these pretensions on the part of the Hyena gave rise. It is sufficient to say that they were put down and utterly rejected in the assembly, many of the beasts having shown with great clearness the dreadful wars and persecutions to which these pretensions had given rise in past times, others having demonstrated the iniquity of such pretensions on the part of any beast whatever, and others

having proved that the Hyena had been, with these pretensions, as far as he could be, an all-devouring tyrant, and that it was necessary to guard against him for the future. They compelled the Hyena to the alternative of either withdrawing from the union, or withdrawing his own pretensions to the government, and so, rather than be regarded as a universal enemy, he chose to swallow his griefs in silence.

It happened on a time after this that a history of the beasts was published, which contained, among other things, a clause as to their original and universal equality. A convention of the beasts was held, in which, among other business, they determined to give this book their approbation, and to have it circulated as extensively as possible. In this convention the Hyena got up and stated that he had great objections to the book as it was, for it went against what his particular race considered as their right, and would be regarded by all the Hyenas as a sectarian book, and contrary to the rules of their union. Strange as it may seem, for the sake of peace, some of the beasts were for altering the book according to the suggestions of the Hyena, not seeing the whole tendency of the movement. And though the author of the book was a wise old Lion, who had his den among the mountains, where they might have sent to consult him on such an important point, they were for cutting out some of his dearest opinions, without consulting him at all.

In this predicament a sagacious Elephant arose and said to the assembly, "It seems to me very surprising that the proposition of our brother Hyena should be entertained for a moment. It seems strange to me that any members of this convention do not see at once that even to receive it is to receive an insult to us all, and to adopt it would be just cutting off our own heads. For when our union was first entered into, it was on the ground of universal equality, and our brother Hyena was admitted into

it only with the understanding that his inordinate and absurd pretensions, which you all remember, were to be withdrawn out of it. Now do you not see, that in proposing to have this clause as to our equality stricken out of this book of history, he does it not out of the desire of peace and union, but out of an ambition to rule? Do you not see that in claiming to have this stricken out, he demands from us a palpable and plain confession that we are inferior to him? I should be ashamed of any beast who would be ready to make such a confession, and to make it for the pretended sake of union would be just to introduce war and prevent all possibility of union. Let the Hyena and all his race dwell apart, if they choose, and crack bones in the desert, but let them not dare to come here and tell us that in publishing the declaration of our equality in dignity and rights, we are publishing sectarian matter, and matter offensive to him and his fellow Hyenas. They would be glad indeed, if they could, to have all our standards abolished, and so be able to steal in with their pretensions, till by and by they will assert them as an established law. For my part, I would rather lose my trunk, than vote to pass the resolution of the Hyena, or even admit it under consideration. On the contrary, I move that he be called to order, and censured for introducing it."

The speech of the Elephant, during which his large ears waved like the gray locks of an old Nestor, carried the whole assembly. They cast out the proposition of the Hyena, and resolved to print the book as it was, and so the ambitious beast concluded once more to swallow his griefs and his pretensions, and to wait for another opportunity.

Here is wisdom. The number of the Beast is

SIX HUNDRED SIXTY-SIX,

and his name is—PRELACY.

DEACON GILES' DISTILLERY.

"INQUIRE AT AMOS GILES' DISTILLERY."

SOME time ago the writer's notice was arrested by an advertisement in one of the newspapers, which closed with words similar to the following: "INQUIRE AT AMOS GILES' DISTILLERY." The reader may suppose, if he choose, that the following story was a dream, suggested by that phrase.

Deacon Giles was a man who loved money, and was never troubled with tenderness of conscience. His father and his grandfather before him had been distillers, and the same occupation had come to him as an heirloom in the family. The still-house was black with age, as well as with the smoke of furnaces that never went out, and the fumes of tortured ingredients, ceaselessly converted into alcohol. It looked like one of Vulcan's Stithies, translated from the infernal regions into this world. Its stench filled the atmosphere, and it seemed as if drops of poisonous alcoholic perspiration might be made to ooze out from any one of its timbers or clapboards on a slight pressure. Its owner was a treasurer to a Bible Society; and he had a little counting-room in one corner of the distillery where he sold Bibles.

HE *that is greedy of gain troubleth his own house.* Any one of those Bibles would have told him this, but he chose to learn it from experience. It was said that the Worm of the Still lay coiled in the bosom of his family, and certain it is that one of its members had drowned him-

self in the vat of hot liquor, in the bottom of which a skeleton was some time after found, with heavy weights tied to the ancle bones. Moreover, Deacon Giles' temper was none of the sweetest, naturally; and the liquor he drank, and the fires and spirituous fumes among which he lived, did nothing to soften it. If his workmen sometimes fell into his vats, he himself oftener fell out with his workmen. This was not to be wondered at, considering the nature of their wages, which, according to no unfrequent stipulation, would be as much raw rum as they could drink.

Deacon Giles worked on the Sabbath. He would neither suffer the fires of the distillery to go out, nor to burn while he was idle; so he kept as busy as they. One Saturday afternoon his workmen had quarrelled, and all went off in anger. He was in much perplexity for want of hands to do the work of the devil on the Lord's day. In the dusk of the evening a gang of singular-looking fellows entered the door of the distillery. Their dress was wild and uncouth, their eyes glared, and their language had a tone that was awful. They offered to work for the Deacon; and he, on his part, was overjoyed; for he thought within himself that as they had probably been turned out of employment elsewhere, he could engage them on his own terms.

He made them his accustomed offer; as much rum every day, when work was done, as they could drink; but they would not take it. Some of them broke out and told him that they had enough of hot things where they came from, without drinking damnation in the distillery. And when they said that, it seemed to the Deacon as if their breath burned blue; but he was not certain, and could not tell what to make of it. Then he offered them a pittance of money; but they set up such a laugh, that he thought the roof of the building would fall in. They demanded a sum which the Deacon said he could not give, and would not, to the best set of workmen that ever lived, much less to such piratical looking scape-jails as they. Finally, he said,

he would give half what they asked, if they would take two-thirds of that in Bibles. When he mentioned the word Bibles, they all looked towards the door, and made a step backwards, and the Deacon thought they trembled; but whether it was with anger or delirium tremens or something else, he could not tell. However, they winked, and made signs to each other, and then one of them, who seemed to be the head man, agreed with the Deacon, that if he would let them work by night instead of day, they would stay with him awhile, and work on his own terms. To this he agreed, and they immediately went to work.

The Deacon had a fresh cargo of molasses to be worked up, and a great many hogsheads then in from his country customers, to be filled with liquor. When he went home, he locked up the doors, leaving the distillery to his new workmen. As soon as he was gone, you would have thought that one of the chambers of hell had been transported to earth, with all its inmates. The distillery glowed with fires that burned hotter than ever before; and the figures of the demons passing to and fro, and leaping and yelling in the midst of their work, made it look like the entrance to the bottomless pit.

Some of them sat astride the rafters, over the heads of the others, and amused themselves with blowing flames out of their mouths. The work of distilling seemed play to them, and they carried it on with supernatural rapidity. It was hot enough to have boiled the molasses in any part of the distillery; but they did not seem to mind it at all. Some lifted the hogsheads as easily as you would raise a teacup, and turned their contents into the proper receptacles; some skimmed the boiling liquids; some, with huge ladles, dipped the smoking fluid from the different vats, and raising it high in the air, seemed to take great delight in watching the fiery stream, as they spouted it back again; some drafted the distilled liquor into empty casks and hogsheads; some stirred the fires; all were boisterous and horribly pro-

fane, and seemed to engage in their work with such familiar and malignant satisfaction, that I concluded the business of distilling was as natural as hell, and must have originated there.

I gathered from their talk that they were going to play a trick upon the Deacon, that should cure him of offering rum and Bibles to his workmen ; and I soon found out from their conversation and movements, what it was. They were going to write certain inscriptions on all his rum casks, that should remain invisible until they were sold by the Deacon, but should flame out in characters of fire as soon as they were broached by his retailers, or exposed for the use of the drunkards.

When they had filled a few casks with liquor, one of them took a great coal of fire, and having quenched it in a mixture of rum and molasses, proceeded to write, apparently by way of experiment, upon the heads of the different vessels. Just as it was dawn, they left off work, and all vanished together.

In the morning the Deacon was puzzled to know how the workmen got out of the distillery, which he found fast locked as he had left it. He was still more amazed to find that they had done more work in one night, than could have been accomplished, in the ordinary way, in three weeks. He pondered the thing not a little, and almost concluded that it was the work of supernatural agents. At any rate, they had done so much that he thought he could afford to attend meeting that day, as it was the Sabbath. Accordingly he went to church, and heard his minister say that God could pardon sin without an atonement, that the words hell and devils were mere figures of speech, and that all men would certainly be saved. He was much pleased, and inwardly resolved he would send his minister a half cask of wine ; and, as it happened to be communion Sabbath, he attended meeting all day.

In the evening the men came again, and again the

Deacon locked them in to themselves, and they went to work. They finished all his molasses, and filled all his rum barrels, and kegs, and hogsheads, with liquor, and marked them all, as on the preceding night, with invisible inscriptions. Most of the titles ran thus :—

“ CONSUMPTION SOLD HERE. *Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery.*”

“ CONVULSIONS AND EPILEPSIES. *Inquire at Amos Giles' Distillery.*”

“ INSANITY AND MURDER. *Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery.*”

“ DROPSY AND RHEUMATISM.” “ PUTRID FEVER, AND CHOLERA IN THE COLLAPSE. *Inquire at Amos Giles' Distillery.*”

“ DELIRIUM TREMENS. *Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery.*”

Many of the casks had on them inscriptions like the following :—

“ DISTILLED DEATH AND LIQUID DAMNATION.” “ *The Elixir of Hell for the bodies of those whose souls are coming there.*”

Some of the demons had even taken sentences from the Scriptures, and marked the hogsheads thus :—

“ WHO HATH WO ? *Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery.*”

“ WHO HATH REDNESS OF EYES ? *Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery.*”

Others had written sentences like the following :—

“ A POTION FROM THE LAKE OF FIRE AND BRIMSTONE. *Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery.*”

All these inscriptions burned, when visible, a “ still and awful red.” One of the most terrible in its appearance was as follows :—

“ WEEPING AND WAILING AND GNASHING OF TEETH. *Inquire at Deacon Giles' Distillery.*”

In the morning the workmen vanished as before, just as it was dawn; but in the dusk of the evening they came again, and told the Deacon it was against their principles to take any wages for work done between Saturday night and Monday morning, and as they could not stay with him any longer, he was welcome to what they had done. The Deacon was very urgent to have them remain, and offered to hire them for the season at any wages, but they would not. So he thanked them and they went away, and he saw them no more.

In the course of the week most of the casks were sent into the country, and duly hoisted on their stoups, in conspicuous situations, in the taverns and groceries, and rum-shops. But no sooner had the first glass been drawn from any of them, than the invisible inscriptions flamed out on the cask-head to every beholder. "CONSUMPTION SOLD HERE. DELIRIUM TREMENS, DAMNATION AND HELL-FIRE." The drunkards were terrified from the dram-shops; the bar-rooms were emptied of their customers; but in their place a gaping crowd filled every store that possessed a cask of the Deacon's devil-distilled liquor, to wonder and be affrighted at the spectacle. For no art could efface the inscriptions. And even when the liquor was drawn into new casks, the same deadly letters broke out in blue and red flame all over the surface.

The rumsellers, and grocers, and tavern-keepers were full of fury. They loaded their teams with the accursed liquor, and drove it back to the distillery. All around and before the door of the Deacon's establishment the returned casks were piled one upon another, and it seemed as if the inscriptions burned brighter than ever. Consumption, Damnation, Death and Hell, mingled together in frightful confusion; and in equal prominence, in every case, flamed out the direction, "INQUIRE AT DEACON GILES' DISTILLERY." One would have thought that the bare sight would have been enough to terrify every drunkard

from his cups, and every trader from the dreadful traffic in ardent spirits. Indeed, it had some effect for a time, but it was not lasting, and the demons knew it would not be, when they played the trick ; for they knew the Deacon would continue to make rum, and that as long as he continued to make it, there would be people to buy and drink it. And so it proved.

The Deacon had to turn a vast quantity of liquor into the streets, and burn up the hogsheads ; and his distillery has smelled of brimstone ever since ; but he would not give up the trade. He carries it on still, and every time I see his advertisement, "*Inquire at Amos Giles' Distillery,*" I think I see Hell and Damnation, and he, the proprietor

DEACON JONES' BREWERY.

DEACON JONES, from early life, had been a distiller of New England rum. He entered on the business when everybody thought it was a calling as honest as the miller's, and he grew rich by it. But the nature of his occupation, and the wealth he was gaining, sadly seared his conscience. Of seven promising sons, three had died drunkards, two were lost at sea, in a vessel whose cargo was rum from the Deacon's own distillery, and two were living at home, idle and dissipated. Yet it never occurred to the father that he himself had been the cause of all this misery to his own family; he was even wont to converse with great resignation on the subject of his trials, declaring that he found comfort in the passage that reads that "*whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.*" His business was very extensive, and he plied the trade of death with unremitting assiduity.

When the Temperance Reformation commenced, Deacon Jones took ground against it. He declared it was a great piece of fanaticism. He was once heard to say, that if the bones of his ancestors could *rattle* in their graves, it would be to hear the business of distilling denounced as productive of death to men's bodies and damnation to their souls. The progress of the reformation was so rapid, that at length he began to see that it must, in the end, greatly injure his business, and curtail his profits. Moreover, he did not feel easy on the score of conscience, and when the members of the Church proceeded to excommunicate a dram-

seller, who kept his grog-shop open on the Sabbath. and had been in the habit of procuring all of his supplies at the Deacon's distillery, he trembled lest his brethren should take it into their heads that the business of distilling was the foundation of the whole evil. It was said that he was much disturbed by an article in the newspaper, which came strongly under his notice, descriptive of the immorality of the business of the distiller, and ending with these words: "*I think I see hell and damnation, and he the proprietor.*" For a long time the deacon could not enter his distillery, without thinking of those dreadful words; he considered them so profane, that he thought the article ought to be presented as a nuisance by the Grand Jury.

At length the perplexities of conscience, and the fears of self-interest, drove him to think seriously of quitting the business. One afternoon, as he was sitting at home, absorbed in thought, a loud, impetuous knock at the door of the apartment startled him, and in walked one of the most singular personages he remembered ever to have seen. It was a man apparently about fifty years of age, very short of stature and sturdy in bulk, with a countenance that indicated uncommon shrewdness, and an eye of preternatural brilliancy and power. Yet his features were extremely irregular, and so evidently marked with strong but compressed passion, as to put one in mind of the crater of a hushed volcano; in truth, his face, in some positions, almost wore the aspect of a fiend escaped from the infernal regions. With all this, he could assume, if he chose, a strange, incongruous appearance of humor; his countenance had that expression when he entered the room where the deacon was meditating.

He had on a coat of blue broadcloth, of the fashion of Queen Anne's age, a white satin waistcoat with enormous flaps, covered with figures of dancing satyrs wrought in crimson silk, and pantaloons of red velvet, over which was drawn a pair of white-topped boots, that reached nearly to

his knees, with feet of extraordinary magnitude. On his head was a three-cornered adjutant's hat, which he raised with an easy bow as he entered. His salutation to the deacon was kindly expressed, though in a very deep, startling voice, that seemed as if it came almost from the centre of the earth. He told the Deacon he was happy to see him, and that knowing he was somewhat troubled in mind, he had called to help him out of his perplexities.

The Deacon looked uneasy at this address, and told his visitor that he did not remember ever to have seen him. Upon that the man laughed very extravagantly, and confessed it was not strange that he did not recognize him: "but no matter for that," said he, "I think I can certainly assure you that I am without doubt the best friend you have in the world."

The Deacon did not care to contradict him, especially as his face just then looked strangely malignant; so he proceeded to draw the Deacon into a long conversation, in which the man in blue and velvet seemed an adept in the mystery of distilling, and a friend to the art. The Deacon told him all his trouble in regard to the Temperance Reformation. "Not," said he, "that I dislike the thing itself, in the abstract. I am as firm a temperance man as any one. But really they do adopt such hot-headed, fanatical measures, and are carrying the thing to such an extreme, that it is enough to put one out of all patience. It is not strange that even good people should be driven to oppose the reformation in mere self-defence. I am for temperance under the broad banner of the law; and the law protects the business of distilling as much as it does any business; in my view the making of rum is just as honest a calling as the making of gunpowder."

The man in blue acquiesced, and told the Deacon he heartily hated these *Anti* Societies for the purpose of putting down particular sins, and he said he thought a great deal more injury was done by intemperate writing

than by intemperate drinking. Nevertheless he told him that he thought a brewery would be quite as profitable as a distillery, and that the business, moreover, would work in very well, just then, with the public mind, on the score of temperance. He proposed a visit to the deacon's distillery, and told him he thought between them they could contrive a new and convenient disposure of the whole establishment.

Accordingly, with this interesting conversation, they proceeded to the distillery, and after examining the premises, sat down in the Deacon's counting-room, in which, it may be remarked, he kept a copy of Bangs on Distillation, but no Bibles. Here again they had a long conversation, after which the man in blue told the Deacon that if he would give over to him the care of the distillery for that night, he thought he could make it a good temperance speculation, and arrange matters perfectly to his mind. By this time the man seemed to have acquired a strange power over the Deacon, and he agreed to all his propositions without much delay. So the workmen retired to their homes at sundown, and the Deacon to his, leaving the keys of the distillery and counting-room in his velvet friend's possession.

That night there was a violent thunder-storm, and the Deacon slept but little. Had he known the scenes that were transacting in his distillery, he would not have slept at all. The stageman who drove the mail passed the distillery, which was situated on the main road, about midnight, and afterwards declared, that through the windows of the distillery, which he thought burned blue, he could see a crowd of wild and savage-looking creatures hurrying to and fro, and though it was thundering at a fearful rate, he could hear the strangest supernatural voices, amidst all the fury of the storm. This was probably not merely the man's excited imagination; for, after the Deacon's departure, as night drew on, the distillery

was filled with demoniacal-looking beings, who seemed ripe even for a midnight murder, and all under the control of the strange man left by the Deacon in the counting-room.

It was soon easy to perceive by their movements what was their object. With supernatural strength and dexterity they proceeded to disorganize the whole internal paraphernalia of the Deacon's establishment. They tore up and emptied all his vats, but carefully deposited the dregs and filth of distillation, wherever they found it, in a large muddy cistern, which they discovered conveniently disposed at one end of the distillery. They took in pieces the whole machinery of distillation, and by a wonderful metamorphosis, they so re-modelled its parts and refitted the vats, as to make them admirably suited to the processes of malting and brewing. The worm of the still they uncoiled, but sheathed the bottom of the new vats with the lead that came out of it.

Some of them I observed were busy in bringing in and piling up huge bags of barley ; others in constructing the furnaces and chambers where the malt was to be dried ; others in filling the cistern, into which the dregs of the vats had been poured, with dirty water dipped from a stagnant pond, covered with green slime and infested with crawling reptiles, hard by the distillery. They set the barley for malt, and so peculiar were the qualities of the malting mixture in the cistern, and so admirable the skill with which they had prepared the furnace and floors for kiln-drying, that a process was accomplished in less than an hour, which ordinarily demanded some days for its completion. The task of mashing was an easy one, and the wort was drawn off and boiled down, and the coolers filled, with surprising celerity ; and to crown all, they set the liquor for fermentation in a tun of prodigious dimensions, which one party had been engaged in constructing, while the others were busied in the process of malting, mashing, boiling, and cooling.

In the midst of all this astounding bustle, the man in

the counting-room was neither idle, nor satisfied with the mere superintendence of his energetic workmen. He stripped off his broadcloth and velvet, disencumbered himself of his huge boots, and appeared the most gaunt, active, and demoniacal among the whole crew. They leaped, and grinned, and jibbered, and swore, in so terrific a manner, that it seemed as if the thunder, which was breaking in such tremendous artillery across the heavens, would have been charged to peal in among them, for their horrible profaneness.

But the most astonishing scene took place while they boiled down the liquor. They gathered in a double circle, and danced to music as infernal as the rhymes they chanted were malignant, amidst the bickering flames and smoke of the furnace, round about the huge copper cauldron of boiling liquid, into which each of them, from moment to moment, adapting the action to the words they sung, threw such ingredients as they had provided for the occasion. I shall scarcely be credited, while I relate what poisonous and nauseous drugs they cast into the agitated mixture. Opium, henbane, *cocculus indicus*, *nux vomica*, grains of paradise, and Bohemian rosemary ; aloes, gentian, quassia, wormwood, and treacle ; capsicum, cassia-buds, isinglass, cods-sounds, and oil of vitriol, were dashed in turn amidst the foaming mass of materials, which they stirred and tasted, scalding hot as it was, with a ferocious exulting delight that seemed to increase in proportion as the quality of its properties grew more pernicious. They could not but remind me of Shakspeare's witches on the blasted heath of midnight, when the charm was brewing for Duncan's murder. Indeed the song they sung, as they leaped about the cauldron, and threw in their infernal mixtures, was so similar to that of those "secret, black, and midnight hags," when they were going to do "the deed without a name," that I think the chorus, in which they all joined, must have been gathered from some copy of the beldams' accursed incantations. They repeated

something very like the following stanzas, only more horrible :—

1st Demon.

Round about the cauldron go,
In the poisoned entrails throw :
Drugs, that in the coldest veins,
Shoot incessant fiery pains ;
Herbs, that, brought from hell's black door,
Do its business slow and sure.

All in Chorus.

Double, double, toil and trouble ;
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

Several Demons successively, 1st, 2d, 3d, &c.

This shall scorch and sear the brain,
This shall mad the heart with pain,
This shall bloat the flesh with fire,
This eternal thirst inspire,
This shall savage lust inflame,
This shall steel the soul to shame,
This make all mankind contend
'Tis their generous social friend.

All in Chorus.

Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

2d Demon.

This shall brutalize the mind,
And to the corporal frame shall bind
Fell disease of every kind ;
Dropsies, agues, fierce catarrhs,
Pestilential inward wars,
Fevers, gouts, convulsive starts,
Racking spasms in vital parts.
And men shall call the liquor good,
The more with death it thickens the blood.

All in Chorus.

Double, double, toil and trouble,
Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

All the Demons in Full Chorus.

Mortal ! yours the damning sin ;
Drink the maddening mixture in.

It shall beat with fierce control,
 All the pulses of the soul.
 Sweet the poison, love it well,
 As the common path to hell.
 Let the charm of powerful trouble.
 Like a hell-broth boil, and bubble.

Double, double, toil and trouble,
 Fire burn, and cauldron bubble.

They sung these devilish curses with dreadfully malignant satisfaction ; and when all the processes in the preparation of the liquor were finished, with equal delight they proceeded to draft it in immense quantities into hogsheads and casks of every dimension. Into every vessel, as they filled it, they put a certain quantity of potash, lime, salt, and sulphuric acid, and then drove in the bung, and wrote upon the cask head, according as it suited their fancy. Some of the inscriptions were as follows :—

“BEST LONDON PORTER, FROM DEACON JONES' BREWERY.”

“PALE ALE, OF THE PUREST MATERIALS.”

“TEMPERANCE BEER FROM DEACON JONES' BREWERY.”

“MILD AMERICAN PORTER, FOR FAMILY USE.”

“BEST ALBANY ALE, FROM DEACON JONES' BREWERY.”

They also filled an immense multitude of bottles from the fermenting tun, and packed them very neatly in strong square baskets, which they labelled in shining letters, in these words :—

“RESTORATIVE FOR WEAK CONSTITUTIONS.—DEACON JONES'
 BEST BOTTLED PORTER.”

A very queer label, as I thought, was used by some, and that was—

“PALE ALE FOR THE NURSERY.”

This work was finished just as it grew towards dawn, and having converted the Deacon's old distillery into an extensive brewery, they all vanished from the building before light, in the same unaccountable manner in which they came into it.

In the morning the deacon walked out towards the establishment, not a little disturbed in his thoughts, as to what might have been going on over night. He found the outside of his distillery not very much altered, though a number of new windows were observable, surmounted with an out-jutting piece of plank like a penthouse, and covered with coarse blinds, through which the steam from the brewery was pouring in volumes. He thought likewise that the brick walls looked larger and longer than ever before, and more saturated with alcoholic perspiration, as though, indeed, they might have taken a midnight sweat. He found the man in blue and velvet walking about in the clear morning air, and surveying the scene apparently with peculiar satisfaction.

Without saying a word the man took the Deacon by the arm, and led him into the building, and after pointing out all the extensive transformations and additions, which had been accomplished during the night's work, he threw open the doors of an immense store-room, where the workmen had filled the casks of liquor for the Deacon, after the midnight brewing. "Now, Deacon," said the man, with a singularly expressive grin, "I think I have removed all your perplexities, and you may pursue your business on temperance grounds. Meantime we will be just as good friends as ever; for I do assure you, that as long as you manage this brewery as I have begun it, YOU WILL BE DOING MY WORK almost as effectually as you were while carrying on the distillery." With that he politely lifted his three-cornered hat, passed gravely out of the building, and the Deacon saw him no more.

The Deacon was greatly puzzled. He knew not what to think of his strange companion, and for a time he hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry for the acquisition of wealth which he saw before him. Especially was he perplexed by the language of the man, when he said, "*You will be doing MY WORK.*" He could not tell what to make

of it, and it troubled him not a little. However, he soon became absorbed in the study of the new machinery, and began to be particularly pleased with the prodigious size of the tun for fermentation, and the vastness of the well-filled store room. He thought he could almost swim a revenue cutter in the one, and pile more than a thousand hogsheads in the other.

In the course of the day he got busily engaged in his brewery, and the liquor was sent into all parts of the country; and wherever it came, and whoever tasted it, it was pronounced the most delicious of all intoxicating mixtures. Confirmed drunkards smacked their lips, and declared that if they could only live upon such liquor as that, they would never touch another drop of New England rum in the world. The Deacon was very much pleased, and some time afterwards he was heard to say, in the midst of a company of bloated beer-drinkers, that Mr. E. C. Delavan, of Albany, would do more to injure the temperance reformation, by his ill-judged crusades against wine and beer, than he had ever done to forward it by all his energetic efforts against rum and brandy. The besotted crew, one and all, applauded this speech of the Deacon, declaring that he had expressed their opinion precisely; for they had long thought that the temperance cause was greatly suffering from the imprudence and misguided zeal of its professed friends.

The Deacon continues his brewery on so great a scale that even his devil-built fermentation-tun is hardly large enough to supply the demands of his customers. It is said that he manufactures the best "Copenhagen Porter" in the country; but every time I see his advertisement, "Inquire at Deacon Jones' Brewery," I hear again the midnight curses of the demons, and think of the dreadful meaning of their leader's language to the Deacon, "YOU WILL BE DOING MY WORK."

THE HISTORY OF JOHN STUBBS.

A WARNING TO RUM-SELLING GROCERS.

"A thing betwixt a story and a dream,—
It had more truth than fact, more fact than fiction."

JOHN STUBBS was a grocer, wicked, but well to do in the world. He was a man greedy of gain, and of a savage disposition. He used to beat a poor little orphan boy in his possession as if it were a pastime, until the child suddenly disappeared, when Stubbs asserted that he had gone to sea, but from that hour the man's brow grew blacker. Some suspected foul play, but as there could be no legal investigation, the thing passed off.

John Stubbs sold rum; indeed, the greater part of his profits were made in that way, and as he used to sell on the Sabbath, he often made more money that day than any other day in the week. Yet you never seemed to notice the shop open of a Sunday; the shutters were all closed, and the doors were closed, there being a nook of an entrance hard by, almost out of sight, where the rum-besotted wretches of the neighborhood could glide in and out without disturbance. Excluding the sunlight from his dominions, John Stubbs went about among his casks on Sunday with a lamp at noonday. On such occasions Satan might have taken him for one of his own demons, and the darkened store, with its half-revealed paraphernalia of drunkenness, for one of the sootiest chambers in the bottomless pit.

John Stubbs did not merely sell rum—he drank it.

What he drank did not intoxicate him ; he was too fond of money for that ; but it burned in him, and bloated him, and made him angry as fire. A poor woman came into the shop one day, and besought him to sell no more rum to her husband, for it starved the children and made the house a hell beforehand. " That's nothing to me," said the man ; " he don't get drunk on my premises. Drink rum yourself, and then you'll agree." A good man in the neighborhood remonstrated with him, and another brought him the temperance pledge. It angered him prodigiously. " He was not going to have his liberty curtailed by your hypocritical temperance societies and your psalm-singing deacons, not he ! He would sell rum, and drink it if he chose, though all the devils in hell were burning in every drop of it." His shop was on a corner and had a parcel of chalk signs, intermingled with herring boxes and potato barrels, ranged on the outside.

John Stubbs sold rum under cover of Law, and that served as a great plaster to his conscience if ever it needed one. It was a lawful calling, and with many persons besides rum-sellers what is lawful is right and just, and as a matter of course. There was no fifteen gallon law, nor virtue enough in the community to sustain it ; and though there was a law against selling liquor on the Sabbath, John Stubbs felt pretty sure, inasmuch as many were known to violate it, and yet no notice was taken of the violation, that he would not be disturbed on that account. Besides, I am not sure but the owner of the building, and John Stubbs's landlord, was a member of a church ; and if church-members would let their houses to rum-sellers to sell liquor on the Sabbath, it was hardly to be expected that the police would interfere. In fact, John Stubbs felt much quieted in his mind, if conscience ever did reproach him, by considering that his landlord was a professor of religion, and certainly would not sanction any occupation that was very sinful. Besides, John Stubbs had argued, at

a time when he really did debate the question, that if he did not sell liquor others would, so that nothing would be gained to anybody by his giving up the traffic ; on the contrary, somebody would be sure to set up a rum-grocery at his side, and perhaps do more mischief than he ; so that on the whole it was a gain to the community if he kept up the business. Let it not be thought that ardent spirits was the only kind of strong drink sold upon John Stubbs's premises ; there was a good array of wine-casks, and porter-casks, and strong beer and cider.

Now it happened that John Stubbs manufactured his own wine ; so that those customers of his who restricted themselves to the use of that kind of liquor, were by far the most profitable to him, inasmuch as they received ardent spirit under a different name, at a far higher price than the poor creatures paid for it who drank it under the shape of rum. John Stubbs's enmity against the temperance society was much abated by that circumstance.

Things went on in this way a long time, and the grocer made a great deal of money ; but all the while he drank rum himself ; and though he had an iron constitution, and could bear a great deal, those who observed him thought it could not last. Many grocers sell rum who do not drink it ; but let no rum-selling grocer congratulate himself on this point, for he is heaping together wealth against the last day, and the time is coming when the rust of all his money gotten in this dreadful traffic will eat into his soul like a fire, ten thousand times worse than that which now began to burn in the veins of John Stubbs. There is some difference whether a man ruins his soul by drinking or by making others drink ; but of two grocers who sell rum, one of whom also drinks, but the other is sober, I doubt if the last will have any more tolerable place in hell than the first. Indeed, on some accounts, it is more wicked for a sober man to sell rum than a drinking one. For a sober man perfectly well knows what it is that he is doing ; he

does it with his eyes open, and with a cool calculation for gain ; knowing all the while that ninety-nine hundredths of the liquor he sells goes to make drunkards.

And whereas, some grocers say that though they do indeed sell rum to be carried away, yet they do not allow any to be drunk on the premises, and do not sell to drunkards, yet on some accounts this is still worse ; for they are just preparing men for utter ruin, before they are gone entirely. They are pushing them on from that stage where they might have been reclaimed, to that position where there will no longer be any hope of reclaiming them. They are making men drunkards by selling, which is certainly as bad as to sell after the drunkards are made. Alas ! how little do they think of that terrible woe from God, so definite, so explicit, Woe unto him that giveth his neighbor drink, that putteth thy bottle to him, and makest him drunken.

One bitter cold winter's night, the woman I have spoken of above, whose child had been smitten with a sore sickness, even unto death, ventured into the grocery to find her husband. She had no money even to buy medicine for her poor sick boy ; her last stick of wood was burning in the cold chimney ; and she was as wretched a woman as could well be. She had come in the faint hope of getting some of her husband's day's wages before they had all gone to pay up his score for drink ; but in vain ; for John Stubbs told her he did not believe her child was sick, and swore that her husband should not stir a step till he had paid up all ; and the miserable man, finding Stubbs' shop a warm place, and his liquor warmer, refused himself to move. So the poor wife returned back, heart-broken, to the place where her child lay dying. She must have perished in her misery had it not been for the kindness of a neighbor, for that night, which was Friday, the child died.

Saturday evening, after laying out her boy's corpse as

decently as she could, she summoned courage once more to visit the grocery ; for the child must be buried the next day, and as yet there was not even a coffin. In the height of her grief she could not help telling John Stubbs, that if it had not been for him her child had been alive and well that moment. Hearing this, the grocer started from among his casks behind the counter, and, with a dreadful face, swore that if ever he had anything to do with that or any other child's death, all the devils in hell might burn him and his shop together. This phrase, *all the devils in hell*, was a favorite oath with John Stubbs, for the man was awfully profane, and so in general were those who frequented his shop, and drank his liquor. Something had now roused the devil within him very fearfully ; for, laying hold of the woman's arm, he pushed her violently out into the street, and cursed the time he had ever seen either her or her husband. Well nigh dead with grief, she tottered home, and threw herself on the body of her dead child. There her brute of a husband found her, only to tell her that if her friends would not help her to a coffin and bury the child, it must lay there all winter, for he had no money to do it. In God's mercy friends were found ; and Sabbath day, while John Stubbs was selling rum by lamp-light, that little boy was put in the grave beneath the cold snow, and the clods of frozen ground sounded to the mother's ears like pieces of sharp iron, as they fell upon the coffin.

That same night John Stubbs' retribution commenced. By what instrumentality it was effected, I will not undertake to determine ; but even the drunkards dimly noted a fearful connection between his oaths the night preceding, and the things that happened. Late in the evening, just as, with trembling hand, for John Stubbs' hand had begun at length to tremble, he was drawing a glass of liquor for a parting customer, his eyes were almost started from their sockets by the sight of a grinning, snaky figure, in flames, right before him. Presently the air began to be full of

them, and each one threw, direct at John Stubbs, balls of fire, with sharp curling snakes protruding out of them. Then one clutched him by the hair, then they all retreated to the wall, and began crawling along and hissing in such horrible shapes, that Stubbs cried out that he was in hell, and the fiends were burning him. So it continued for near an hour, till every inmate of the shop ran out of it in terror at his shrieks and language. Apparently he recovered, for he was seen shortly by the watch putting up a bar outside one of the windows, after which he entered, closed his door, and did not again open it.

About two o'clock the watchmen were alarmed by the sudden appearance of a bright light streaming through every crevice into the street, and on bursting open the door the shop was all of a fierce blaze, and there lay, blackened and crisped like a cinder, but on the floor, where the fire was not blazing, though the air itself seemed all flame, the body of John Stubbs. From the position and appearance of the body, and the horrible stench that with the flames poured out of the shop, there was no doubt that Stubbs had somehow or other inadvertently brought the flame of the lamp in contact with his breath, and had been consumed, even before the shop itself got on fire, by spontaneous combustion. Be that as it may, the flames increased so furiously, by the casks of liquor bursting one after another, and running in so many streams of fire all over the shop, that, before assistance could be got, it was no longer possible to reach the body; and as to putting out the flames, the water of the engines was of no more use than if it had been oil. Blue and red torrents of fire shot up into the sky, and some averred that they saw, as plain as ever they beheld anything in their life, the body of John Stubbs held between two demons in the vast flickering blaze, and a boy piercing his heart with a spear of red hot iron. Whether this was mere imagination or not, perhaps it was very natural to think so; and certainly all the

figures of torture that the spouting and roaring flames could form, would be nothing to the torment of a damned soul in hell, that in this world, as it is to be feared is the case with all rum-selling grocers, was engaged in the business of preparing the bodies and souls of men for everlasting damnation. It is fearful even to use the words, but if so, what shall be said of the business?

PART SECOND.

DESCRIPTIVE AND MEDITATIVE.

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear:
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?
I hear thee babbling to the vale,
Of sunshine and of flowers,
But unto me thou bring'st a tale
Of visionary hours.

NOTES OF NATURE AT SARATOGA.

THIS is a morning of such exquisite brightness and beauty as Adam and Eve might have beheld in Paradise before their fall. Some things are still left in this world, some aspects of nature, that seem liker heaven than earth, and such that the sons of God might shout for joy to behold them, as when this fair creation rose out of chaos. This morning is such a scene. The low, lingering clouds, and the dead, close, dog-day weather, are swept off by the north-west wind, and everything is as bright, fresh and vivid, as if the finger of God had just touched the world anew. How brilliant the atmosphere! It reminds us of the saying in Job; "fair weather cometh out of the North; with God is terrible majesty." The connection between these two phrases is singular, but in some seasons and changes of the atmosphere, even in our climate, it is singularly impressive. There is something in such a morning as this, that gives the mind a vivid image of the radiant glory of God in his holiness, his purity, his majesty.

And how sweet, how full of enjoyment, is a walk in the wild woods on such a morning! The trees seem to enjoy it as much as we. How clearly defined is everything in the bright, clear air. And the shadows themselves, with what distinct outlines they fall upon the green grass! Those tall pines seem to have grown higher towards heaven, and the clusters of cones upon their topmost branches, like the young fruit of some species of palms, are distinctly visible. So is every separate brush and spire of the foliage,

with the broad leaves of the oak, glossy and lustrous in the sunshine, as if it had just been raining; and the delicate leaf of the maple, and the pointed leaf and round green nut of the hickory, and the silvery network of the spruce, with the sun shining through it, and the gray embossed berries or buds on the spreading hemlock;—you can see them all; it seems as if the light penetrated them, and as if they were cut out from the solid atmosphere. There are several pines in the grove near Congress Spring, which are truly magnificent; everybody remembers them, and how they tower, like giant sentinels, over the whole wood. They seem the relics of the primeval forest, and remind one of those tallest pines upon Norwegian hills, of which Milton speaks as but a wand, in describing the spear of the fallen Archangel. What majestic trees they are! And there is a most picturesque beauty in those hemlocks also, notwithstanding the angular obstinacy with which they push out their snag-like branches into the air. They are trees, which Ruysdael would have delighted to copy. The fir trees are not so remarkable, but still most beautiful. And what a noble, various forest may be constituted out of our most common native trees; the oak, the pine, the fir, the maple, the elm, the walnut, the hemlock, the cedar, the birch, and the beech, sometimes all growing together, or within a very little distance, and affording at all seasons a wonderful variety of verdure; but in autumn, when the frost begins its ministry, making such a gorgeous mixture of colors, as no art can imitate, nor any painter describe.

If there is anything in nature to be grateful for, it is such a morning as this. The sunshine in the atmosphere is like the light upon the soul, when “God shines into it, to give the light of the knowledge of his glory, in the face of Jesus Christ.” The air is such,

“As to the heart inspires
Vernal delight and joy, able to drive
All sadness but despair.”

In such a morning in the soul and in all nature, it seems as if you could see far out into the eternal world ; as if the spiritual world and the natural world were commingling ; or as if the latter were but an illuminated veil, through which mortals may be able to see and to bear the glory of the former. One such calm, bright morning, is able to make up for a whole year of toil, dust, and noise in Broadway. Perhaps indeed a residence in the great city prepares the mind and heart to enjoy with a keener relish, a more sensitive, intelligent perception, the beauty and the meaning of rural sights and sounds, when a man does get amongst them. But no ! a man must dwell much with nature to read her lessons aright, or he must have been much with nature in the wild woods in early years, to keep the forms and habitudes of the city from crusting over his interior spiritual perceptions of nature, as with a coat of ice. " I thank God," a man should say, as he grows into life, " for every impulse which the grass, the trees, the flowers, the running brooks, the clouds, awake within me. I thank him that he does not suffer to die away from my relish and admiration the rising and setting glories with which, morning and evening, he fills the world. I thank him, above all, that if, as sense grows blunted, and decays by age, or by reason of nervous derangement, ceases to represent truly the forms of nature, the freshness and beauty of this visible world are veiled from me, there is still no decay, but an ever-during increase, in the power of faith, so that the world to come does but shine brighter, as the world that now is fades away. Though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. I thank God that the light of this world, beautiful though it be, is but a symbol of that radiance, unspeakable and full of glory, which his Spirit diffuses through the soul."

But ah, how many walk in the light of this world, and enjoy it, whose condemnation it is, that though a greater light than that of nature has come into the world, they

heed it not, but hate it ! The light of this world, which should only lead to the greater light, as but an emanation from it, they use instead of it. And thus by the light they pass into darkness. This is the history of our fallen world, under the light of nature, as detailed by the Apostle in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.

Pursued aright, how various, how delightful, how solemn, how instructive is the study of nature ! It is the study of the Divine wisdom and goodness, in Creation and Providence. Those writers whose researches and productions assist the Christian in this study, and direct the mind of the observer to God, confer a great blessing on society ; while those *philosophers*, so-called, who put nature as a veil or wall *before* God, are but using their knowledge of his works to make infidels.

“ Acquaint thyself with God, if thou wouldst taste
His works. Admitted once to his embrace
Thou shalt perceive that thou wast blind before.
Thine eye shalt be instructed, and thine heart,
Made pure, shall relish with divine delight,
Till then unfelt, what hands divine have wrought.”

The steps are plain, from nature to the Author of nature and to his natural government ; from his natural to his providential, and thence to his moral government in this world ; thence to his eternal government. The light of nature grows as we pursue it, till it meets that of revelation and is absorbed in it, and both carry us by Faith into unclouded, everlasting day.

NATURE IN THE BERKSHIRE MOUNTAINS.

THERE are few places more beautiful than Williamstown. What a noble range of dark, verdant mountains, filling the horizon, rising in majestic amphitheatres on all sides ! How deep and rich the hue of the foliage, how varied and soul-like the aspect of all nature ! The green mountain slopes, with forest glades and broad pasturages, mingled with soft meadows, dotted with clumps of trees, surround the village, and form a scene varying in beauty with every hour in the day, and every change in the sunlight. And what a change does the sunlight make ! Take a day like this, of clouds somewhat heavy, and threatening rain, with some sprinklings of it at intervals, and you may ride about, and think the scenery beautiful, even in such a leaden, misty atmosphere. But if, as to day, the sun comes out at evening, if the clouds are swept from the sky, and a clear sunset pours its golden light over the mountains, and bathes the meadows, the trees and the village, it seems a new creation. You should be upon the hills to witness the breaking of this sunset from west to east, how its glory travels down into the valley, and up the richly wooded mountains, driving away the mists, or setting them on fire among the foliage.

What a superb position is this for a College ! I cannot but think that familiarity with such scenery, the constant beholding of the grand forms and rich hues of such mountain ranges, exerts a silent, ceaseless influence in building up the character, even though the soul seem unconscious

of it. No place is more favorable for witnessing the processes of nature, and the changes of the seasons. The gorgeousness of the forests in Autumn, when the frost, that magic painter of the foliage, begins to change their hues, passes all description. The freaks which the frost plays upon the mountain tops, before it gets down into the valley, are beautiful. Sometimes you rise in the morning and see the summits of the mountain ranges all around the horizon tipped with white frost, a girdle of glittering rime, in contrast with the many-colored foliage, the line between the frost and the verdure being perfectly distinct. The mountain called *Graylock*, receives its appellation partly from this phenomenon, it being the highest peak in this range, and receiving the Autumnal baptism of frost somewhat earlier than any other portion of the mountains. Thus it has upon its forehead a gray lock, like that upon the head of Time ; and since the clouds rest upon its summit often when they do not descend upon any lower portion of the hills, it keeps this gray lock, between the action of the frost and the mist, almost the year round. You cannot see Graylock from the village of Williamstown, it being hidden in the Hopper, by a lower interposing range of the Saddleback. The Hopper is the name given to the infolding of the mountains, where they come together in shape like the receptacle or mouth through which the meal pours from the millstones, when corn is grinding ; an appellation about as appropriate as *notch* to a vast mountain chasm, and homelier still. It must be confessed that there is a great resemblance between this formation of the mountains, and that part of a grist-mill termed the *hopper*. Doubtless, it was the village miller who first applied the name. Out of this hopper rises the majestic, verdant form of Graylock, about 3500 feet above the level of the sea.

The rides and drives in all this region are delightful. New and picturesque spots of calm and sometimes romantic beauty are breaking upon you, and there is an almost in-

finite variety in your circuit of views. From the mountain ranges on every side, at a very easy access from the village, you command a vast, rich and varied prospect. Perhaps the finest view of the valley and the village is from an easy ascent about a quarter of a mile from the Mansion Hotel, especially if you are there of a clear sunset. Or if you happen to be upon the College Observatory at the same hour, nothing can exceed the loveliness with which the rich evening light falls aslant upon the meadows and the trees, and almost sets on fire the mountain masses of verdure. Then the constantly deepening and changing shades upon mountain and valley, how beautiful ! The veiling clouds and the breaking sunlight chase each other. Evening, morning and noon, have their sets and peculiarities of light and shadow ; the morning with its freshness, the noon with its broad and still solemnity, the evening with its golden colors deepening into the twilight. All seasons here are times for meditation, times when nature gives you abundant food for thought, and materials for thanksgiving and prayer.

I say again, how beautiful, how admirable is such a place, as the situation for a College. The young student is to be envied, who, with a keen and sensitive perception of the beauties of nature, has his lot cast here for the four years of his college education. It ought to make him a better and a wiser man all his life-time, to have the grand forms of these mountains before him at such a period of his existence. And then this secluded spot is so shut out from the dangers, the temptations, the examples, of large towns and cities ; it is much to be praised on this account.

I found some old friends here, ruralizing among the mountains, and others who have become natives of Williamstown since I visited this region before. One of them, whose family was absent for a season, met me with a rueful countenance and the following couplet, which was all

he recollected of a whole antique poem, but which had got full possession of his mind :

“ Home is a solitary place for one
Who loves his wife, and finds her gone.”

I should like to have seen the whole poem. This part of it will never be forgotten till the mountains crumble.

There is a poetic inspiration in the scenery, as the following lines will prove, given to me by a friend hitherto more addicted to logic and metaphysics than poetry, but who cannot resist the quickening influences of nature and of early recollections. The lines were the result of a walk by the meadow, and not a mere philosophic meditation in the closet. A soft, quiet meadow, and a rippling trout stream, with the branches of the willows dipping into it, might have set old Izaak Walton himself to writing poetry. As to fishing, he would have found the ground pre-occupied, and all the stock taken up ; for, though there are plenty of trout, yet, as my friend told me, there is at least a boy to every trout. But there is not a poet to every meadow ; so here are the lines :—

In the sunshine lies the meadow,
Sleeping by the stream,
A soft and lovely meadow
Remembered from a dream.
A dream now strangely stirring—
A thought that springs in tears—
The lovely past recurring,
A dream of early years.
On the border of the meadow
Where flows that happy stream,
There's many a flitting shadow,
And many a dancing gleam.
For the bright green leaves are trembling
In the gentle summer breeze,
The light and shade commingling
Beneath the willow trees.
The stream is softly flowing
With a ripple low and sweet,

Where the willow branches bowing
The lovely waters meet.

And in the ripple hiding
The trout securely lies,
Or neath the green bank gliding
Escapes the angler's eyes.

Here the meadow-larks are singing,
And the cat-bird and the jay,
Harshly or softly flinging
Their joyous notes away.

And hopping there, or flying,
With happy sounds of life,
The insect tribes are plying
Their puny toil and strife.

It is a lonely meadow,
No human dwelling near,
A green and pleasant meadow,
And the stream is cool and clear.

This meadow is no strange one,
These sounds I've heard before;
The days of boyhood bygone
These sounds and sights restore.

O there beneath the willow,
Beside a gentle stream,
The soft grass was my pillow,
When I lay me down to dream.

What dreamt I in the meadow
Beside the gentle stream?
What was the flitting shadow,
And what the sunny gleam?

I may not tell—I may not tell—
'Tis not for common ears—
But who like me hath dreamt, full well
Remembers it with tears.

NATURE AT ROCKAWAY.

THE beach is cool and lonely. The margin of the ocean, and a vast tract of land on its borders, make up an uninhabitable desert, like some of the wastes of Egypt. Scattered with the unavailing attempts of Nature to spread a carpet of tough spiky grass over the sand, the region reminded me of some of the borders of the Nile near the temples of Thebes, except that here there are no palm trees, nor indeed a solitary shrub of any kind for some distance from the shore. The Pavilion, on the edge of this desert, commands a vast, majestic ocean view, of undisturbed sublimity. To get to the beach across the sand, you have a rude raised walk of boards, and for the convenience of bathing you have sundry huts, on wheels or stationary, equally rude, with tents or bowers made of fresh-cut evergreens and dry old hemlocks intermingled, where you may recline on wooden benches, shielded from the sun, and gaze upon the face of the sea. The thunder of the surf is grand. It rolls along an extent of six or eight miles of smooth white sand, unbroken, not so hard to the hoof of a horse as some beaches you may have walked upon, but broad, level and beautiful. Now if we had some tall jagged cliffs for the surge to beat against, or some fearful ranges of breakers, or a high overhanging promontory, from which to watch the changes of ocean, the combination would be perfect.

“ He views the ships that come and go,
Looking so like to living things ;

O ! 'tis a proud and gallant show
 Of bright and broad-spread wings,
 Flinging a glory round them, as they keep
 Their course right onward thro' the unsounded deep.

“ And where the far-off sand-bars lift
 Their backs in long and narrow line,
 The breakers shout, and leap, and shift,
 And send the sparkling brine
 Into the air: then rush to mimic strife:—
 Glad creatures of the sea ! How all seems life !”

Who that has read Mr. Dana's Poem of “ The Buccaneer,” from which these two stanzas are taken, and then visited a sea-beach, has not remembered it, and thanked the Poet for it ? Its descriptions are admirably vivid and striking, more wild and imaginative than the sketches of sea-shore scenery from the accurate pencil of Crabbe. This beach at Rockaway is wild and lonely, a good place for Matthew Lee to ride with his spectre-horse, and out-run the racing surf, and see the ship on fire, and the moon, and the mists. But there are no dripping rocks for Matthew Lee to climb upon.

“ In thick dark nights he'd take his seat
 High up the cliffs, and feel them shake,
 As swung the sea with heavy beat
 Below—and hear it break
 With savage roar, then pause and gather strength,
 And then, come tumbling in its swollen length.”

The sea sometimes rages as well as roars, even when it is not stormy at Rockaway. We have had charming weather, but a strong south wind has blown the sea into such furious breakers on the beach, and they hurry and race one after the other with such impetuous strife, and high tide of commotion, that it is almost like a tempest. Each wave behind seems flying to devour and swallow up the one preceding it. In they come, with such a rush, tumble and confusion, as makes the white yeasty waters boil and foam as if the tail of Leviathan had stirred them.

This is a capital surf to bathe in. You should have a

life preserver or swimming belt, and then you may go far out, and enjoy it fully. You ride upon the great crested waves like a sea-gull, and they swing you about, or send you dancing in upon the beach, or burst over you like a cataract, and still you rise, as if with elastic rebound they were tossing you into the air, instead of seeking to smother you. It is fine invigorating sport. And there is probably something in the beat of the briny surf, as it strikes upon you, that aids the ordinary bracing action of a salt water bath. Then, too, the exercise of swimming is so admirable! Three times a day we have followed it up, till a keg of pickled beef was scarcely ever better salted. Besides, the air itself has been so saturated with salt moisture in the prevalence of this fresh south breeze, that our clothes have almost gotten stiff with salt; a little more, and we should be fine specimens of incrustations.

But the perfection of beauty and enjoyment in this scene, and in the bathing, also, is by moonlight. How beautiful the ocean, with the white-crested tops of the waves rolling in upon the beach beneath the full moon, the smooth sand glittering like a steel or silver floor, the shells themselves and the wave-worn stones shining like silver pebbles in mosaic, with the creamy foam of the sea sparkling over them, and the melancholy little beach-birds running among them! In the direction of the moon, the sea almost blazes with her lines of silvery light, while in the other quarter of the horizon it looks black and terrible. There in the distance, far over the dark waves, you see the two red lights that on the Jersey shore instruct and warn the mariner. One of these lights is fixed, the other is revolving; emblems, you may think, of the difference between the immutability of religious truth in the word of God, and in changing human experience. See! you never lose sight of one; there it shines, with a steady, changeless lustre. But the other disappears. Now it is gone, now it shines again. They look alike, when you see them together, but the one is revolving and partial, the other is stationary and perpetual.

NATURE IN A TROPICAL VOYAGE AT SEA.

WHEN you come to the news of a trial that had been waiting for you, while in ignorance of it you had been going on in an easy if not happy mood, in the enjoyment of God's mercies, you seem to yourself to have done wrong in not being afflicted beforehand. This is especially the case, if you find that God's hand has been laid in affliction on those dear to you. So there seems something inconsistent in your having a delightful voyage, when even before it commenced God had clothed you in unconscious mourning. Nevertheless, this makes no difference in his mercy.

We *had* indeed a delightful voyage, and I mention it, to suggest the same voyage to those who, returning from Europe in the autumn, may dread the roughness of a northern passage, and the cold and perils of our coast in that season. In a few days from our leaving Havre, we found ourselves in a mild and balmy atmosphere, in delicious weather, in smooth seas, under the influence of a wind so prosperous and invariable that sometimes a ship may run before it for weeks without changing a sail. You can scarcely conceive anything connected with the sea, more delightful than crossing the ocean in this manner. Evening after evening the day closed with such magnificent sunsets, as only at sea between the tropics you can ever witness, and morning after morning the dawn broke, and the sun rose, with a beauty and a glory, which to see but once would be worth a voyage to Europe, if you could see it in no other way. In all this lovely weather we had a lovely

moon, and we watched her course from the pale silver thread that at first scarcely outshone the star that sailed with her in the heavens, to the splendor of her fulness; and what can be more beautiful than the full moon in a summer latitude at sea? What more beautiful than such a moon rising from the sea amidst lovely sailing clouds into the deep heaven, and creating that long, tremulous line of light between the ship and the horizon, in which the waves roll like liquid gold? And what more beautiful than to witness, in a calm summer's night, a total eclipse of such a moon riding in mid heaven? And then, again, what more beautiful than to watch the moon and stars contending in their lustre with the breaking dawn and lost so gradually and softly in the advancing splendor of the sunrise?

The phenomenon of the eclipse we witnessed about the middle of our passage; it was indescribably beautiful, and as solemn as beautiful, to see the veil drawn over the face of the planet as by the hand of God, to see the stars come out, and darkness settle over the waste of waters, and then again the veil slowly withdrawn, the stars hidden, and a mild, pale lustre diffused upon the bosom of the deep. And we, the watchers in this solitary ship, marking this solemn scene, shall it not make us feel how easily God can veil our life in darkness—can put, if he pleases, the light of our eyes far from us? When He giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when He hideth his face, who then can behold him? whether it be done against a nation, or against a man only? The hiding of God's face! If men saw and felt it as clearly as they see the darkening of the heavenly bodies in an eclipse, what grief and consternation would it spread over the world! But men care little for the darkness, who have never seen or known the light. And this, alas, is the case with most men in reference to God.

It was near the middle of December when we arrived amidst the Bahama islands and banks, the weather still

continuing delightful, and the wind fair. The passage across the banks is sometimes not unattended with danger, and it may well make a seafaring man anxious, when his vessel passes suddenly from deep water into the midst of a shoal where the ship's keel is but a foot or two from the bottom. All the way across the banks you hear the deep, melancholy voice of the leadsman, as he heaves the line and announces the fathoms deep, and all the way you can see the dark sponges on the white sand, like tufts of evergreen in the desert. There are fearful jagged reefs on the edges of the banks, which, as we passed them towards evening, looked in the horizon like the ruins of an ancient city. It was almost calm, yet the spray was dashing high upon them, and we were glad when again we had plenty of sea-room between our little ship and the grim forms of such dangerous breakers.

We arrived in safety, by the mercy of God, although a tempestuous night which we had to spend about twenty miles from the shores of Cuba, made all on board anxious, and made me think of the solemn lines of Dante ; solemn they are at sea, when you are getting to the close of your voyage, since a vessel's perils increase with every league by which she nears the coast.

For I have seen the ship that o'er the sea
Ran safe and speedy, perish at the last,
Even in the harbor's mouth.

So it is often with our plans of happiness and usefulness in life, of the wreck of which, however, we are ourselves too frequently the cause, and can only suffer silently in the light of an experience "which does but illumine the path that has been passed over." But there is a brighter side to Dante's lines, for he says also that he has seen many a bush, which through the winter showed nothing but unsightly sticks and thorns,

Bear yet the lovely rose upon its top.

There are plants, for which this world is all winter, and of which you will never see the rose, till you find it blossoming in heaven.

I wish again to recommend this tropical voyage from Europe to the West Indies, for any persons of delicate health or constitution, who are obliged to return to the United States late in the Autumn. True, it takes a longer time, but the most fatal mistakes are sometimes made with invalids for want of a little longer time, and there is often the most fatal choice of the season for a voyage. I lately perused a most affecting manuscript journal of a young clergyman, who in pursuit of health left a circle of dear friends, a warm fireside, and every comfort, in the month of December, on a voyage to the Mediterranean, in a ship, of which the cabin itself had like to have proved his grave in the outward voyage, being close, damp, cold. By this and the boisterous weather, he found himself more ill than he probably would have been on shore, even in winter. Then, after this, having recruited a little in the south of France, which itself, Marseilles at least, is a miserable climate in winter, he undertook to return in the month of February, but never reached the land, though the ship arrived in safety.

A mild and somewhat dry air at sea is requisite for such an invalid, and if he cannot go in such a latitude or such a season as to secure this, it would be better to remain at home, or go to the South by land. A voyage from Cuba to the Mediterranean in the spring, or from the Mediterranean to Cuba in the Autumn or Winter, is delightful, and ordinarily it is one of the safest voyages in the world; where, if halcyon birds of calm do not sit brooding on the wave, it is not because it is too troubled, for the breeze, which fans your temples like the west wind in June, keeps it in such steady and playful motion, that it would rock the black duck, with her glossy wing, like a cradle.

Among the many instructive lessons which a mind so

disposed may learn at sea, that of self-examination is an impressive one. A soul on the voyage of life must know its motives, and its besetting sins and dangers. There are so many under-currents, of which, if a man be ignorant, let his sails and his helm be as they may, he will go to destruction. It is not enough that the ship's course be set right, and her helm kept steady. Sailing from Cuba, we thought we had gained on our course, one day, about sixty miles, but at the next observation found we had lost more than thirty. It was an unknown current. The ship had really been going forward with the wind, but going back likewise with the current. Under certain circumstances, unless such a current were taken into consideration in setting a ship's course, she would be wrecked, with ever so fair a wind. So with the heart and its motives. A man's course may seem to be set right, with a fair wind towards heaven, but what is the under-current, what is its direction? Which way is his inward existence moving? And how far may the needle in his compass be turned out of its course, by the concealed loadstone of self-interest?

THE DISCONTENTED LADY-BIRD.

A PROVERB ILLUSTRATED.

It is an active thing, that hath much meaning in it,—that old proverb,—*A rolling stone gathers no moss*. It reminds me of Homer's *Kulindeto*. The application of it may be abused, for it might seem to sanction sluggishness, and the want of energy and enterprise; a little more sleep, a little more slumber; a soft bed of moss is a very pleasant thing for a stone to recline upon. Pity to disturb it by rolling.

But there is a side of bright truth to this proverb, and a sin of restlessness, change, and discontent in man, which it condemns. Men are never satisfied with the dispensations of Providence towards them, and instead of asking, How may I make the most out of my present situation, and do the most good in it? they are always uneasy, always ready for a change. Meddle not with a man given to change. Reputation is a thing of gradual growth; it comes from acquaintance, from stability, from habit; if it be good, let a man stay by it. It is the house of his character, and three removes are equal to one fire.

Steadiness of purpose, with a contented mind, is worth more than a great many shining qualities, that are not so stable. I shall try to illustrate this for the little children, and therefore we must put our proverb into a parable.

There was once a little Robin Readbreast, very fickle-minded and fanciful. It was a wonder to everybody how

she could ever fix upon a husband, and how any bird that valued his own family happiness, and knew anything of her character, could take her to wife. However, she was very pretty, with a very sweet voice, and a little roving Robin fell in love with her, and in the Spring-time they were married, and went to making their nest. Little master Robin worked like a good fellow, early and late, and they had nearly got the nest finished, in fine time for the summer season, when the Lady-bird discovered a thorn in it, which it was difficult to remove, without breaking it up, and so persuaded her husband to abandon it.

Then they went to work upon another, but no sooner had they got it nicely feathered, and warm and comfortable, than the discontented Lady-bird found that it was too high in the tree, and that a strong wind would overset it. So she persuaded her husband to abandon that also. Then they commenced another in the centre of a barberry bush, where it would be very difficult for any school-boy to come at it; and they had just got it almost ready for their abode, when the Lady-bird, returning one day from a visit, told her husband, who had been working hard all day to finish the nest, and had even got a company of upholsterers to help him, that the materials out of which they had built it were so far inferior to their neighbors', and so unfashionable, that it would never do to dwell in it; all their friends, she affirmed, would cut their acquaintance. So, by dint of much complaining, she persuaded her mate to abandon that also.

Now there was a wise old owl in that neighborhood, that had been watching their proceedings, and one day, when they came near his nest to gather some down and soft moss for another of their own, he thus addressed them. "Silly birds! Do you not see how the season is advancing, and with every change you are losing in time more than you are gaining in taste? See how the very berries on your Barberry-bush are becoming red with the approach of Au-

turn! By the time you get satisfied with your nest, the warm months will be over, and then what will you do with your young? Had you been contented with your first situation, you might by this time have had a family of songsters about you, all provided for. But you will never be happy so given to change, for a rolling stone gathers no moss, and your discontent is always preventing you from realizing the happiness that you might enjoy in life.

"And let me tell you, pretty Mrs. Robin Redbreast," said he to the Lady-bird, "that if you go on giving yourself such *airs*, instead of contentedly helping your good-natured husband in his efforts to provide for your *heirs*, you will never have a family, though you live to be as old as the Phoenix."

The Lady-bird tossed up her head at this, and flew off, declaring that she never heard such a miserable pun in all her life. But Master Robin was very much mortified. And it turned out just as the old owl had predicted; for though these two Robins at length got settled, and had a couple of little bright speckled eggs shining in their nest, yet it was so late, that one frosty morning, just after the young had broken their shells, and while the parents were looking up a few seeds and worms for breakfast, the poor little things were so badly chilled that they died; and then, in the first emigration, the bereaved Robins had to go off to the tropics in mourning.

SECRET OF SUCCESS IN PREACHING.

FLETCHER of Madely was one of the most earnest and successful of preachers. He was a man of prayer, much prayer, and herein lay the secret of his power. His biographer tells us, that "his preaching was perpetually preceded, accompanied, and succeeded by prayer. Before he entered upon the performance of his duty, he requested of the great Master of Assemblies a subject adapted to the conditions of his people ; earnestly soliciting for himself wisdom, utterance, and power ; for them a serious frame, an unprejudiced mind, and a retentive heart. The necessary preparation for the profitable performance of his ministerial duties was of longer or shorter duration, according to his peculiar state at the time ; and frequently he could form an accurate judgment of the effect that would be produced in public, by the languor or enlargement he had experienced in private. The spirit of prayer accompanied him from the closet to the pulpit ; and while he was virtually employed in pressing the truth upon his hearers, he was inwardly engaged in pleading that last great promise of his unchangeable Lord, 'I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.' From the great congregation he again withdrew to his sacred retreat, there requesting in secret that a blessing might accompany his public labors, and that the seed which he had sown, being treasured up in honest and good hearts, might sooner or later become abundantly fruitful."

All good ministers of the Lord Jesus do thus seek the

blessing of God before and after their pulpit labors. But there is a great difference in the degree of earnestness and fervor with which they seek, and of course a proportionate difference in the degree of blessing which they gain. Some knock loudly, others faintly ; some strike once, twice, thrice, others seven times ; some wrestle with tears, others are comparatively formal. There is no gift of Divine Grace more precious to a minister of Christ than a spirit of persevering fervency in prayer, no gift which he ought to seek more earnestly and to cultivate more assiduously. Oftentimes, perhaps, when he is laboring away upon his discourses, and thinks that this and that presentation of truth *must* be effectual, the good effect upon his hearers is owing more to his prayers than his sermons. A minister's prayers may be compared to the powder, by firing which the cannon-ball is sent upon its errand ; without the prayers, his sermons will be little better than a heap of cannon-balls without powder. There must be prayer from a heart on fire.

Some sermons are like a bright artillery-piece for a model : all finished, burnished, shining ; everybody says ; " What a splendid piece of ordnance !" People stand and look into its mouth, and measure its breech, and lift the ball it can carry, and admire it without fear, for there is no powder in it. It is not meant to shoot any person, but to attract admiration as a finished piece of ordnance. An elaborate model-sermon, without prayer, is a gun that a man might put his ear to the muzzle of without fear. And some sermons are like the artillery-pieces that are wheeled into line in a *sham-fight*, and fired with blank cartridges. There must be both powder and ball, if execution is to be done. Above all things, there must be much prayer. There must be prayer on fire.

NATURE IN THE SOUTH OF SPAIN.

IF you will take the map of the world, and draw a line from north to south at twenty-four degrees twenty-six minutes west longitude, and then intersect it by a line drawn from east to west at forty-one degrees and six minutes north latitude, you will probably find, at the point of intersection, the place of our present existence on the broad Atlantic. You will see that we are not far from the Azores, but perhaps twelve hundred miles from our desired haven. We have learned that a sea-voyage, with all its lessons of man's insignificance and dependence, will not, of itself, necessarily draw the heart to God. Watchfulness and prayer, even amidst all the sublimities and dangers of the ocean, are just as necessary as on the land. It would be a season of growth in grace unparalleled, if a sea-voyage awakened and sharpened the soul's hungerings after righteousness as powerfully as it does the body's mortal appetites. But the heart must be kept with all diligence, or no external circumstances can keep it. Trials alone will not soften it, blessings will not purify it, dangers will not make it cleave to God. Nothing but his own blessed Spirit can do this.

For a season we were in the neighborhood of one of those uncertain rocks laid down in the charts of the Atlantic Ocean, which the Spaniards call *vigia*, the *look-out*, which few mariners, if any, have met with, but with which once to meet might be destruction. Our captain endeavored to keep the ship on a course eighteen or twenty miles at least

to the south of the reef, the supposed proximity of which made us a little anxious. After a day or two, the ship, to his surprise, notwithstanding her southerly course, and the very favorable winds we had been experiencing, had not made the *southing*, or progress southward, which he expected, and it was soon found that while our course was set right, and the breezes seemed to aid us, a strong current, of which no one had been aware, setting the other way, defeated our calculations, and carried us almost exclusively eastward. The incident seemed to our minds a striking symbol of the dangers encountered in the Christian conflict, and of the frequent failures in a man's course through life. Sometimes, when it seems to be set right, and all influences propitious, an undetected cause hinders our advancement; a hidden prejudice, an unsuspected flaw in the character, a sinful propensity ungoverned, a selfish plan secretly cherished, may turn the Christian from his God. Opposing currents and concealed ones, the heart's natural bias, particular inclinations and besetting sins, are to be discovered and watched against. For want of this, the charts of Christian experience are dotted all over with the black marks of sunken rocks and melancholy shipwrecks.

At length we are within sight of land, and gliding along with a soft and pleasant breeze on our course to Gibraltar. This morning, for the first time, I beheld the OLD WORLD, the world, whose very soil and atmosphere seem older than our own, so powerful is the effect of their association with the ideas of ancient institutions and manners, cities, towers, and temples, that have stood the revolutions of a thousand years. The land we made was Cape St. Vincent, with a lofty convent rising on its outermost extremity, whose white walls are the first object that arrests the eye of the stranger. Thus the first introduction of the mind to the knowledge of this country is the hieroglyphic of its history for ages, and the badge of its present degradation. Amidst

the historical recollections that crowd upon the memory, I can scarcely realize that I have been all day sailing within sight of the coast of the ancient Lusitania, the kingdom of Portugal.

Another evening, and we are still quietly moving towards Gibraltar. It is now a dead calm, but the current sets through the straits with such rapidity, that we are moving on at the rate of four or five miles an hour. I seem all in a romance or a dream, when I find myself thus wafted onward with the coast of Spain in full sight on one side, and the shores of Africa on the other. In imagination I have been often here, but never thought to see these lands in sober certainty of waking vision. There is no moon, but the stars are out, and the coast on either side is clearly visible. Surely it is a very great mercy to have been preserved from every disaster, and brought so near to our first destined port in safety; we are equally dependent on an unseen God to carry us securely through the short remaining distance. Often do I think, and with much solemnity, of those beautiful lines of Dante, beginning—

“For I have seen
The bark that all the way across the sea
Ran straight and speedy, perish at the last
Even in the haven’s mouth.”

There is more in this than a landsman imagines; for a sailor’s perils thicken as he nears the harbor. An hour’s fog on the coast may wreck him, when a week’s storm at sea would do him no injury.

Another lovely evening, and we found ourselves riding peacefully in the romantic harbor of Gibraltar. Amidst external objects, I have seldom spent a day of such enchantment as the first we passed within the walls of that celebrated fortress. It was almost a realization of the

dreams that have captivated my childish imagination in oriental tales. Nothing ever so strongly depicted before me the coloring, or made me breathe the atmosphere, of the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. If I had been dropped from the clouds, or transported unknowingly from the familiar scenes at home to those around me, I could scarcely have been more surprised and filled with admiration at the contrast. Such a mingling of the sublime, beautiful, and picturesque, with the grotesque and the ludicrous, of the ordinary with the romantic, of strength in art with majesty in nature, of war and peace, of all dialects, figures, faces, garbs, and religions, of lovely scenery with human life and artificial manners.

When we arrived in the bay, the ship had dropped anchor while we were asleep, and I went upon deck during the night, without the least expectation of the extraordinary nature of the scenery around me. The first object that arrested my sight, with a nearness and vividness really startling, was the black, frowning mountain, rising like a huge bank of cloud against the sky, with its lower half all illuminated by the lights in the city. It seemed as if a multitude of meteors or lanterns had been hung one above another against the sides of the mountain, constituting one of the most picturesque scenes I ever beheld. Around me rose a perfect amphitheatre of hills, enclosing the smooth expanse of harbor like a lake, or mirror for the surrounding panorama. The calm night, the bright stars, the smooth and peaceful water, the ships of war riding around us, the encircling shore, the distant mountains, and in the front the great Rock of Gibraltar, with an illuminated village hung upon its base, in such nearness, that it seemed almost to overhang the ship, formed altogether a scene of exciting interest for its novelty and beauty. Its power was increased rather than diminished, when the morning rose upon it, and in the clear light, with all the enchanting effect of distance and shade, its hidden materials, in various

coloring, came into notice ; the rough grey summit of the mountain, the Moorish castle hanging half way down, the grotesque looking buildings, clustered in narrow terraces above each other, as though each terrace stood upon the roof of the next below, the fortifications at the base, the vessels of every description revealed in the harbor, the towns of San Roque and Algesiras in the north and west, and the receding hills and mountains lovely in the sunlight.

MALAGA AND THE MEDITERRANEAN.

By this time you are all surrounded at home by snow-drifts half as high as the top of the house, while we are sitting comfortably in January without a fire, in the noon of a day as lovely as the pleasantest of our days in Spring. From this you may judge of the climate. Since the rain the weather is delightful, and the mountains around Malaga are already putting on a richer and more verdant coloring.

It was a clear and splendid afternoon when we weighed anchor in the bay of Algesiras, and bidding adieu, for the present, to the sublime scenery and impregnable fortifications of Gibraltar, stood out into the Mediterranean, on our course for Malaga. The distance is only sixty miles, but for want of wind we were a night and a day in accomplishing it. It was a delightful sail, for the sea was smooth, and sparkled beneath the beams of a cloudless sun, the air was clear, and nothing could be more lovely than the outline of the coast of Spain, as far as the eye could view it. The distant mountains of Grenada, covered with snow, were always visible, and nearer to the coast, the eye ranged among the receding mountains of Andalusia, sprinkled over with the white farm-houses of the peasantry. The beauty of the changing and deepening tints in the sky and on the tops of the mountains at evening as the sun goes down behind them is extreme. Though the middle of December, it was a sunset sky as soft and beautiful while it lasted, as ours in midsummer. But at this season the twilight passes

rapidly, and the rich coloring of the evening horizon was almost as momentary as it was exquisite and changeful.

There is no great beauty in the approach towards Malaga from the sea, except in the grandeur of the Cathedral, and the lofty fortress of the Gibrál-Faro. These noble piles of Spanish and Moorish architecture are distinguishable at a great distance, towering far above the whole city, and placed in bold relief against the brown declivities of the mountains in the back ground. From the interior the approach to the city and the Mediterranean is very lovely, for you descend from the very summits of the mountains that sweep down upon the luxuriant *vega* or plain in which Malaga is so beautifully situated, winding gradually downwards into its bosom, varying your view every moment, with the plain, the city, and the sea all before you. As to the architecture of the city, except its splendid Cathedral, and some few Moorish remains, interesting to an antiquary, it has nothing. Neither do the fine arts flourish, nor literature, nor religion; nothing but grapes, almonds, raisins, wheat, wine, and oil. There are all things in this delicious region to gladden man's heart, to strengthen his bones, and to make his face to shine; but for his mind and his spiritual being, nothing.

Out of doors the air is full of pictures. Come with me, and we will take a very early stroll through the city, to see its life, on a morning as balmy and delightful in the middle of January as the sweet days in the pleasantest part of a New England Spring. We are now close by the Cathedral, and in the interior of the city.

Directing our steps first towards the mole, we emerge suddenly from the narrow street to a view of the whole harbor, with its variety of shipping and multitude of lighters and small boats commencing the day's activity, and shining brightly in the sunrise. Off the harbor, a very large ship, apparently a man of war, may be seen through the glass, standing across the bay, perhaps to gain an entrance. Sea-

ward, everything looks full of life and animation, bright waves curling in the breeze, and white sails in the distant horizon glancing to the sun. Through scattered groups of peasants and boatmen gathering to their day's labors, we pass along the mole, till our attention is arrested by a gang of *presidarios*, or *prisoners*, chained, ragged and wretched in their appearance, stupid, sensual and ferocious, seated on the wall by the road side, and eating their breakfast of black bread, as though there were nothing else in the world worthy of notice.

From the mole we enter upon the Alameda, and crossing its smooth and at this hour nearly solitary walks, strike into the busy hive in the main market place of the city. This consists of an open square, from which several streets diverge, and in every part of which, as in the narrow stalls around it, the peasants expose their produce and eatables. The variety and luxuriant abundance of green vegetables and salads in mid-winter will arrest your notice. Sometimes you see them arranged in the central part of the square, in the form of a hollow parallelogram, within which groups of peasants are loitering, with their mules just unladed, while crowds of household servants, both men and women, and here and there a master of the house, are gathering the day's supply of provisions, which they put into open grass baskets or bags, and carry home upon their shoulders. Men, women and children stand at their piles of vegetable merchandise, or in the mouths of their little stalls, and attract your attention by the vivacity of their cries, if not by the novelty of their articles. The abundance of ripe, red tomatoes is a rich spectacle, piled up in lofty pyramids, and flanked perhaps by the long, grey scalloped leaves and white roots of the Spanish artichoke, or luxuriant heaps of green and tender lettuces. Green peas are a customary article at all seasons. Baskets of green cresses, and bunches of white cauliflower, turnips and radishes, parsley and spinnage, with heaps of

enormous onions, piles of long red potatoes, stacks of sugar cane, and immense quantities of oranges and lemons, both sweet and sour, cover the ground in every direction.

A street leading from one corner of the square is occupied as a bread-market, and makes a very rich display, considering the simplicity of its materials. At this hour it is crowded with *borricos* just in from the country, with their panniers filled with loaves of the nicest bread, white and brown, the owners busy in disposing of their loads to customers. In one end of this street you see a row of matrons, seated by the house-wall, with variously formed loaves of brown bread, spread out in baskets or mats upon the pavement before them, and chattering with one another and the peasantry with a merry glee, inspired by the morning air, the busy scene, the hope of good gain, and the plenty before them. The sight indeed is enough to renew the appetite of childhood, and make even the confirmed dyspeptic forget his cares. The diet-lecturers and bran-bread consumers in our country would dance for glee at the spectacle; for in truth the brown bread of the province of Andalusia is some of the lightest, sweetest, and most wholesome in the world. The white bread is equally excellent in its kind. It is baked in circular rolls, shaped like a diamond ring, or in square loaves, which are sold for eight or ten cents, the brown loaves being considerably cheaper. One reason for the constant excellence of the bread in Spain is because it is thoroughly kneaded and equably and thoroughly baked. It is brought into the city in open panniers in the clear morning air, instead of being shut up smoking from the oven, to perspire in the bakers' carts. Sometimes the whole quantity brought in of a morning is condemned and given to the poor, simply because the loaves are found deficient in weight.

In Grenada I have seen a kind of bread exposed for sale, made of the *garabanzos* or Spanish beans, of a golden yellow color, but not very pleasant to the taste, though

doubtless nutritious in its quality. If sour bread be rightly put down among the sources of domestic discontent, perhaps the cheerfulness of the Spanish peasantry may be attributed partly to the sweetness of their brown loaves; at all events, with such bread, and a plenty of olive oil, and the common fruits and vegetables of the country, they may live perhaps better than the peasantry of any other country in Europe. A very common and favorite dish called *migas* is composed entirely of bread crumbled very fine into a frying-pan with oil and salt, the crumbling and stirring continued over the fire till the mass is sufficient in quantity, and rendered savory with the seasoning. The sweetness of the bread is preserved, and the dish appears upon the table a pile of light crumbs, a little moistened with the oil, and a little embrowned in the operation of frying; nor could any man of simple appetite desire a more wholesome and *relishing* breakfast. In the country they cook it in immense quantities, adding to it shreds of meat, garlic, and red pepper, and composing a dish as familiar to a Spanish peasant, as an oriental *pilau* to the natives of the East.

I am afraid of saying too much upon a business so gross as that of eating. *Si tibi deficiant medici*, says an old dietetical adage,

*Si tibi deficiant medici. medici tibi fiant
Hæc tria; mens hilaris, requies, moderata diæta.*

If you want physicians, take these three: quiet, a cheerful mind, and spare diet. Milton may paraphrase this pleasant maxim in the *Penseroso*, adding another line on the pleasure of rural exercise—

And join with thee calm Peace and Quiet,
Spare Fast, that oft with gods doth diet:
And add to these retired Leisure,
That in trim gardens takes his pleasure.

Intemperance is by no means confined to the drinking of

ardent spirits. There are multitudes, who becloud the mind, and render the soul's upward aspirations difficult, if not impossible, by the indulgence of an appetite, which they never dream of being inordinate, but continue to cherish as an indication of hearty health. If a man may be a drunkard upon wine, so may he be a glutton upon vegetables. "Our elegant eaters," says Cicero, in one of his letters, "in order to bring vegetables into fashion, have found out a method of dressing them in so high a taste, that nothing can be more palatable. It was immediately after having eaten very freely of a dish of this sort, at the inauguration feast of Lentulus, that I was attacked with a disorder which has never ceased till this day. Thus you see that I, who have withstood all the temptations that the noblest lampreys and oysters could throw in my way, have at last been overpowered by paltry beets and mallows." If all the philosophy of Cicero could not save him from being overcome in this manner, perhaps even the Graham bread may not always preserve its disciples from temptation.

From one side of the vegetable-market we pass a short distance into the *Alhondiga*, or grain-market, a large pile of buildings formerly connected with the great Moorish naval arsenal, and used as a mosque, but afterwards converted into a convent by the Catholics, and now turned to the more useful purposes of a deposit for wheat. It contains storehouses and arched stalls, with a broad open court in the midst, where the grain lies before you in heaps and sacks, just brought from the country by groups of peasants, who are bargaining for its disposal. The wheat of Malaga is one of the most important and excellent productions of this region; the kingdom of Andalusia producing so great a quantity that it has been called the granary of Spain. *Rain or no rain*, says the proverb, *there is wheat in Andalusia*. Its superior excellence is one cause of the superiority of the bread. Its price in Malaga is from 46 to 52 reals a

fanega, or, upon an average, one dollar a bushel, the Spanish fanega containing a little over a bushel and a half of English measure. If this delightful province were a state within the limits of New England, fertile as is its soil, and abundant as are its productions, there would be a scarcity of bread-stuffs, through the remorseless consumption of the distilleries. I know not what would become of the multitude of the poor in this country, if those scourges of the world were as common here as they are with us. There are but few of them, and the people are unquestionably a temperate, and so far a happy and a healthy race. What an anomaly does it present when the United States are compelled to send into Europe for a supply of bread! And what a pernicious example of political economy, when the legislatures of those States are seen legalizing the manufacture and sale of ardent spirits, and thus absolutely turning the agricultural industry of the country into its bane, and the source of its life and health into a poison! Houseless children are crying for food, while the distilleries are wasting it, and the arm of the law is stretched forth to protect a trade that manufactures out of its waste and consumption, the materials to convert its homes into earthly hells, and their parents and natural protectors into brutes.

Passing through one of the arches of the Alhondiga, we emerge into a street, on one side of which the inmates of the houses are busy frying fish upon open furnaces before their doors, and selling them to the passers by. A little urchin with one hand full of figs is bargaining with the mistress of one of these furnaces for a few *buccaronies* to complete his breakfast. These are a curious little fish, somewhat larger than "the triton of the minnows" in a fresh-water river, and are produced in such immense quantities in the bay of Malaga, as almost to constitute the riches of the fishermen and the living of the poor. They are very delicious and very cheap, so that they are con-

sidered quite a peculiar gift of Providence to this region. Great quantities of them are made into anchovies.

Around these various market-streets the crowd we meet is of the most motley character, men, women, and children, grey-haired and withered hags, that might have been the prototypes of Shakspeare's witches, some with strings of braided garlic, others with hats, shoes, and old clothes, others with rusty firelocks, or boxes of jewellery, others again with roasted chestnuts or baskets of fruit, anything that will tempt the motley multitude, and gain an *ochavo* in the bargain. Carriers of sweetmeats struggle through the crowd, others with earthen jars of water, others with a tin canister of hot coffee, and a basket of cups to drink it withal. The scene is as ragged a medley as can well be met with. In the dusk of the evening, when the lamps are lighted, its irregularity and wildness make it still more striking.

From the market squares we will pass in our way homewards through one of the main streets near the Guadal Medina, occupied partly by mechanics, some of whom are out before the doors of their cells, with their benches in the open air. Here is a man with an iron roller, bending sheets of thin wood for the manufacturer of sieves, which you see inside his shop, lining the walls, in every stage of their progress. Close by his side, a woman, with her furnace on the doorsteps and a flat wooden spoon in her hand, is frying pancakes, or *bunuelos*, as they are called, for the palates of such as may choose. The trade of the *bunueleras*, or women who fry and sell these cakes, is quite a source of profit at the corners of frequented streets. A little onward, and we pass several shops of bottle-makers, or manufacturers of wine-bags, a singular spectacle to the eye of a stranger, the walls hung round in every direction with half-tanned inflated hogskins and goatskins, black, brown, and gray. The skin is taken entire from the animal, and, turned inside out, constitutes the bottle or bag,

the hairy side being covered with a coating of pitch. Drinking vessels with wooden rims in the form of shot-pouches are manufactured from the same materials; and you may often see the peasants, with their mules laden with bags of wine, stopping to drink of their contents out of these rustic cups. All the wine brought in from the country is thus transported in skins on the backs of mules, and is sold generally not by measure but weight. The same is the case with the olive oil; but the bottles or bags for oil, instead of being coated with pitch, are tanned on both sides. In the district of Malaga alone there are more than five hundred oil presses.

At the head of this street a water fountain plays perpetually, surrounded at this hour with a number of peasants, who are filling their jars with water by means of a long reed connected with the neck of the jar, and applied to the mouth of the fountain. Turning into another street, we meet a company of the same chained and haggard *presidarios*, whom we saw on the wall of the mole, their leader enveloped in a ragged *capa*, thrown over his shoulders with all the dignity of a Spanish grandee. They are employed in tying up immense heaps of black bread, lying before them on the pavement by the baker's door; they raise it on their shoulders, and then file off in regular order towards their prison on the quay. The bread is the food of the prisoners, coarse, but sweet and wholesome.

It is now the hour of mass in the churches. Entering the Sagrario, or parish church of the Cathedral, you see here and there a solitary worshipper, kneeling towards the altar, before which two or three priests, clad in their service-robes, are monotonously running over their superstitious ceremonies. A single female is kneeling at one of the confessional boxes, within which sits a portly *padre*, his ear bent attentively towards the netted window of the box, where the lips of the penitent are pouring forth the avowal of her sins. To God, to the saints, and to the priests, she

makes the confession, and supplicates the latter to pray to saints and angels for the pardon of her soul. Her conscience is left with her confessor, and that within her bosom is almost seared and paralyzed by the habits of her religion. And the conclusion forced upon the mind by an attentive observance of the forms and influences of Popery in a Roman Catholic state, can be no other than this, that at best it is a religion which leaves the whole multitude of its followers *without God in the world*. May the God of all grace have mercy upon this unhappy kingdom, and may the Faith of Christ speedily be established over the ruins of the Empire of the Man of Sin.



MILTON'S CORRESPONDENCE.

WHAT would not the world give for a collection of Milton's Private Correspondence! The only letters that we have of his are letters of State, grand letters, letters written with the wide eye of the world over the shoulder of the writer. But of epistolary correspondence, of that which is a careless hasty record of a man's familiar thoughts and feelings, as they come and go in the current of every day's existence, we have nothing.

"Thy soul was like a star, and dwelt apart;
Thou hadst a voice, whose sound was like the sea;
Pure as the naked heavens, majestic, free;
So didst thou travel on life's common way."

We hear the roar of the sea; the voice in English literature is as that of Niagara among waters. We behold, too, the perpetual shining of the star, but there is a sense of *apartness*, a majesty of loneliness about it. The roar of the ocean is grand, but it is pleasant sometimes to hear the gurgle of the running brooks among forest leaves, when "inland far we be." And such a music is in the minor poems of Milton, but we have no familiar letters.

FEBRUARY IN THE SOUTH OF SPAIN.

I CAN scarcely imagine a more lovely day than this—the atmosphere clear, sweet, and mild, the sky bright and glorious, with no cloud to be seen, save here and there a white thread casting a speck of shadow on the sides of the distant declivities, and a robe of fleecy silver resting on the summits of the Western Sierra. The sun is shining with the power of summer in New England, and the west wind plays across one's temples with the refreshing coolness of a breeze in May. It seemed a day,

“able to drive
All sadness but despair.”

The Mediterranean enjoys its influences like a living intelligence, and reciprocates them into the atmosphere, stealing and giving beauty. Its waves play softly in the sunlight, and slowly and indolently swell and break upon the beach, with a musical liquid gurgle, most refreshing and delightful. A ride along the seaside towards Velez-Malaga such a morning as this, quickens all the animal spirits to an exhilarating sense of the happiness of existence in such a world of beauty. The song of the fishermen, and every movement of man, woman, and child, as they draw their nets to the shore, and are busy on its margin, seem tinged with the romantic coloring of its climate. The peasants, as you meet them, seem as if they breathed contentment from its loveliness. All the joyous influences of sea, and air, and sunshine, drop like the falling dew upon the

animal system, stealing over every nerve, and raising it with the most pure and healthful excitement. It is happiness *to be*; and a man feels as if he could dance like a little child, from the mere instinctive impulse of delight.

So sweet and enlivening are all the influences of man's earthly habitation upon his mortal frame, if he bears about a mind at peace with God. If the body be undiseased by sickness, or pleased and soothed with the grateful sensations of returning health, at such a season as this the mind is powerfully awakened to a sense of the goodness of God, and a delight in the feeling of his Omnipresence. The face of nature, in such an hour of uninterrupted, universal beauty and harmony, is to the soul a sweet image, though infinitely inadequate, of the Divine Loveliness. It leads, or certainly it ought to lead, the heart directly up to Heaven.

"If such the sweetness of the streams,
What must the fountain be!
Where saints and angels draw their bliss
Immediately from THEE!"

It were well if the mind could retain that habit of holy meditation, which such a scene begins to lead it into, and the heart that glow of gratitude, and that lively, quick perception of mercy, when the individual returns from the open contemplation of the Divine works into the world of human society. But how readily, amidst human dwellings and worldly employments, does the heart wander away both from nature and from God!

The fragrance of a field of sweet peas in blossom was delicious as I passed it—redolent of all images of vernal delight. Indeed, the winter in this region was over some weeks ago, and here, in the middle of February, the season when the cold is at its height of power in New England, an American experiences the climate of summer. A week or two since, the almond trees were all in blossom, and a novel and very beautiful scene it was. I cannot but esteem

the climate of Malaga as one of the finest in the world. It is doubtless the sweetest in all the region of the south of Spain, and that is considered superior to the climate of any other country on the Mediterranean, except, perhaps, a part of the south of Italy. A fortnight of cold weather and a fortnight of rain may be said to constitute the winter. and even that is of so mild a character, that we could scarcely compare it, without injustice, to any period between the months of November and April in our own country. The air is dry and pure, the sky serene, the changes neither sudden nor difficult to be borne. The penetrating wind that is experienced sometimes in December, after a long succession of dry weather, is trying while it lasts, and brings with it something like a catarrhal epidemic; but in general, the year round, the weather is equable and the climate salubrious. It combines, in truth, the purity and sparkling clearness of a mountain atmosphere, with the refreshing wholesomeness of the sea-breezes. In the winter the surrounding hemisphere of mountains serves as a barrier against the sweeping north winds, and in the summer the heat of the land breezes is tempered and moistened by the air from the sea. Sudden changes of the weather, so trying to the constitution in our northern zone, are strangers to this climate, and so are the damps and fogs, and hanging, leaden drapery of clouds, that affect equally the mind and the body of an invalid, depressing the spirits in depriving the nerves of their elasticity.

The evening air is almost as wholesome as that of the day, and the early morning is extremely pure and delicious. It is not possible to describe the beauty of the sunset after a clear day, and a soft west wind have thrown their influences into the atmosphere. The extremity of the Mole by the Linterna, or light-house, is an admirable point of observation, and a walk thither in the cool of the morning, or the glow of the setting sun, is very delightful. You are almost out at sea, and surrounded by the blue depths of the

Mediterranean on either side. You command a front view of the city, and the range of mountains in the west, behind which the sun is slowly sinking. As he levels his departing rays across the wide plain, and over the city, against the spire of the Cathedral, and the battlements of the Gibr-al-Faro, and over the harbor, the shipping and the mole, it is a scene of surpassing loveliness. The vast plain between the city and the mountains is covered with a cloud or haze of light, out of which the range of mountains rises, with their base colored with the deepest indigo, while their summits are bathed in the golden blaze, which the sun pours over all the western horizon. The twilight tints are beautifully rich and strange, changing continually; and the extent of horizon from which the shafts of crimson and golden light, or bundles of arrowy rays in quivers, shoot up athwart the sky from the departing sun, includes almost the whole western hemisphere. The effect upon the outline of the sea is very rich. As the sun is setting, even the distant coast of Africa sometimes becomes distinctly visible, and the ships, at the outermost line of the sea and sky, hang themselves like little sailing clouds, in the atmosphere.

The surprising clearness of the atmosphere brings distant objects near, and minutely distinct, and the intensity of the coloring, and yet the mellowness of every hue is as if heaven and earth were steeped in crimson. All this towards the west. On the other side the moon is silently commencing her reign, with two fair stars just below her; and the coast, as it stretches away to the east, is lost from the eye in the dimness of evening. The Moorish mountain begins to look wild and supernatural as the shades gather around it, and towards that side the face almost gathers blackness, while towards the west you seem as if fronting the splendors of eternity.

I am reminded in some respects so powerfully of Byron's description in the fourth canto of *Childe Harold*, and it is

in itself a description so true of the sunset as I now witness it, (though written in Italy,) that I cannot but quote a part of his stanzas.

The moon is up, and yet it is not night.
Sunset divides the sky with her—a sea
Of glory streams along the Alpine height
Of blue Friuli's mountains; heaven is free
From clouds, but of all colors seems to be
Melted to one vast iris of the west,
Where the day joins the past eternity;
While, on the other hand, meek Dian's crest
Floats through the azure air, an island of the blest.

A single star is at her side, and reigns
With her o'er half the lovely heavens; but still
Yon sunny sea heaves brightly,
Filled with the face of heaven, which from afar
Comes down upon the waters; all its hues,
From the rich sunset to the rising star,
Their magical variety diffuse;
And now they change; a paler shadow strews
Its mantle o'er the mountains; parting day
Dies like the dolphin, whom each pang imbues
With a new color as it gasps away,
The last still loveliest, till 't is gone—and all is gray.

Combined with the beauty of this scene, you have, in returning from your walk, the picturesque cluster of ships in the harbor, with all the animating sights and sounds of the port—the ships, galleys, feluccas, and vessels of all nations, the sounds of the hammer, the odor of the tar, the evening hum of the mariners, the sweep of the oars, as the boats pass and re-pass between the quay and the shipping. The genius of Crabbe would find admirable subjects for his graphic pencil. If you are fond of the ocean, you may enjoy it here in all its aspects. In this respect Malaga is different from most cities, for the sea rolls in at its foundations, and a few steps will take you to the beach, or give you the view of the whole harbor, with all its animating movements.

LOOKING UP THERE, AND DOWN HERE.

THE celebrated Matthew Wilkes was once in company with a young clergyman who was appointed to preach in the chapel formerly occupied by Whitefield. Having to look into the Bible in the pulpit for some purpose connected with the services before the congregation were assembled, Mr. Wilkes discovered the young minister's notes between the leaves. "What! (said he) notes, where Whitefield preached? What! are you going to *read* a sermon from Whitefield's pulpit?" "Ah! (said the minister) the place is large, and is a new one for me, and I tremble at the thought of coming to the people without some written preparation." "Ah, well, well," said Mr Wilkes, "it may be so; but remember, (and here he looked up to heaven, at the same time laying his hand upon the manuscript sermon on the desk) remember, the more you look up there, the less you'll find it necessary to look down here."

This was very striking. There is a great deal of heavenly meaning contained in this sentence of Mr Wilkes. There is a great deal of instruction for every minister. "*The more you look up there, the less you will have to look down here.*" The more you look to God, the less will be your dependence on yourself, and on man. The more you look to God, the more independent you will be of yourself and of man. The more superior you will be to the *fear* of man, which bringeth a snare, and the more powerful you will be in yourself, by the grace of God within you. Look

aloft ! It is the only way to get safely down. Look aloft ! Whether you have notes before you, or thoughts within you, or both, it is the only way to make them available, the only way to give them power over your hearers, the only way to speak them as from God, the only way to preach with comfort and happiness to yourself, with power and benefit to your hearers. Look up to God ! It is the only way to make your hearers look thither also. If *you* see nothing but your manuscript, your *hearers* will not see much in that. And if you have not gotten your manuscript from *God*, your hearers will get little of God's thoughts from *you*. Your notes may have come from God's word, but if you yourself do not look up to God, the *power* of God's word will not be in them. A man needs as much help from God to preach a written sermon, as he does an extempore one ; nay, perhaps more ; for a fluent extempore speaker may preach a torrent of mere words with some warmth to the hearer, if there be a fervent manner, when, if the torrent had been confined to a manuscript, it would have proved a very cold shower, or a mere damp drizzle. There is, indeed, too much of this drizzle in preaching.

Good thoughts in *notes* are apt to have more value, but they do not make so much *noise*, as light thoughts in *specie*. Your hearers themselves must be in the habit of going to the bank to prove your notes, and then they will find out their value. If you got them at the bank of heaven, your hearers will find that they are of more value than extempore silver. If you only made them yourself, they will be worth nothing at all. A handful of extempore six-pences, procured at the mint, will be better than hundreds of pounds signed only by yourself on paper. But if you did get your notes at the bank, your hearers will know it, even while you are issuing them ; there being always an indefinable demonstration in the air and manner of the man who, as Matthew Wilkes says, "*looks up there*," that makes his hearers feel and say involuntarily, He got that note at the

bank ; it has the stamp of Heaven's chancery. But heavy notes need more feeling in their issue, in their delivery, than light extempore sixpences. You may make much jingle with the latter, and this will pass with many for fervor, but with the former, unless you have the fervor which is obtained only by "*looking up there*," you will make but little impression on others, and even the notes which you get from the word of God will make but little impression on yourself.

The word of God needs the Spirit of God, and while the word of God may be studied *in the letter*, and preached *in the letter*, merely by "*looking down here*," the Spirit of God can be obtained only by "*looking up there*." It is only the preacher, who *looks up there*, that knows how to *look down here* aright. The same may be said of all Christians, of hearers as well as preachers. Matthew Wilkes' word is as good for one as the other. The more you look to God, the less you will find it necessary to look to man. The more you look to God, the better you will know how to look to his word, and the more you will see of him in it. And as to notes in the pulpit, the more you are in the habit of looking up to God before you go to church, the more you will see of God in the preacher, and the more you will receive *from God through* the preacher, if indeed he himself is more in the habit of looking *up there*, than *down here*. And if not, the hearer will know it. But whether the preacher looks up to God or not, it is none the less your duty to do so. And it ought to be remembered that the more you look up there, the more the preacher will look up there also. The way a church looks has a great influence on the way a minister looks. Wherefore, let all look up to God.

RAKING WITH THE TEETH UPWARDS.

WE were amused with the account given by a sensible old farmer, of a minister of his acquaintance, who he thought preached rather too smoothly, with too little application to the conscience. "Why," said he, "he seems to be a good man, but he *will* rake with the teeth upwards." Now this is very expressive; there is much meaning in it. Raking with the teeth upwards is as bad as sowing upon fallow ground without breaking it up. Raking with the teeth upwards will never gather the hay. Raking with the teeth upwards, or harrowing in the same manner, will smooth over the field, but will neither rake in the seed, nor rake out the weeds. A preacher knows not how to do his work, who rakes with the teeth upwards. The teeth of the gospel are not set in this way, but point down, into the heart and the conscience.

Men of the world, and men after it, do not rake with the teeth upwards, but downwards. Politicians often rake with the teeth upwards. Flatterers always do, but the work which they do is not raking, but smoothing and covering over. Raking with the teeth upwards, in a preacher, is handling the word of God deceitfully. Raking with the teeth upwards is Satan's work; ye shall not surely die. Paul raked the Corinthians with the teeth downwards, and made them both sore and sorry. They sorrowed to repentance, and in this Paul rejoiced, for the gospel rake in his hand had done its work effectually.

In the pursuit of riches, men rake with the teeth downwards. There is Bunyan's Muckrake, for example. Men *must* rake with the teeth downwards, if they expect either to rake out principles or riches. Good principles, the things of sterling wisdom, are below the surface, and men must not only rake, but dig for them.

The work of the gospel is not surface work, but deep work. The gospel husbandry needs to be carefully and prayerfully performed. If men go sowing their seed by the wayside without care, the fowls of the air will come and devour it. There may be whole baskets of good seed, but if it is thrown away in this manner, little good can come of it. Here and there a seed *may* take root, but the likelihood is otherwise. The good husbandman will stir the soil, if possible, and not throw his seed to the fowls.

Our tract distributors are in one sense wayside sowers. But then, if they are faithful, they stir the soil, they use the rake with the teeth downwards. Whenever they can find a bit of soil that promises well, they soften and prepare it as much as possible, while dropping in the seed. Nor must the seed be withheld, because the soil is *not* promising, or because they are not permitted to use the rake or the harrow. Wherever soil is found, there the seed ought to be dropped; and prayer itself, if nothing else can be used, may be both spade, rake, and harrow. And when the rain of the Spirit falls, the seed, though "buried long in dust," shall be quickened.

HEART-LEARNING.

It is a striking idiomatic phrase of our language in the lips of children, *learning by heart*. "I have got it all by heart, every word of it." Things got by heart are generally lasting. But there is a great difference between getting things by heart and getting them by rote. Some things may be learned by rote, others can be learned only by heart. Too much of our learning is mere rote-learning, too little of it is real heart-learning. Heart-learning is the best ; heart-learning stays by us.

Heart-learning is the only true learning in the School of Christ. There is head-learning, book-learning, word-learning, chapter-and-verse-learning, system-learning, but if it does not come to heart-learning, it is all useless. Heart-learning is heaven's learning. The angels know all things by heart, and the head-learning of saints on earth, in proportion as they get near to heaven, is all changed into heart-learning. Heart-learning is that celestial geometry, of which the Apostle speaks, the comprehension of the breadth and length, the height and depth in the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. Heart-learning is the book of faith's natural philosophy, whereby we can understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, and can hear their music,

"Forever singing as they shine
The hand that made us is Divine."

Heart-learning is the origin of true lip-learning, for with

the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and then with the mouth confession is made unto salvation, and the conversation is with grace, seasoned with the salt of Heaven. But on the other hand, if any man seem to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, that man's religion is vain. He has no heart-learning.

True scriptural-learning and true theological-learning is heart-learning. Many things may be gotten by the head, and there are many head-theologians, very subtle and speculative. But theology must be gotten by heart, or it is worthless. Head-learning may be other men's learning; heart-learning is our own. Head-learning is second-hand and imitative; heart-learning is original. Head-learning is dry study; heart-learning is experience. Head-learning is often filled up without prayer; heart-learning is gotten on one's knees, and with sighs and tears.

The lessons which are learned by heart, without prayer, have to be unlearned, for they are mostly the lessons of our depravity. If not unlearned and repented of, they are lessons of misery. The lessons of God's grace, learned by heart, stay by us to eternity, and bless us forever increasingly. The lessons of Divine grace, once learned, are never forgotten. Happy are they in whom the lessons of the word are lessons of grace, lessons gotten by heart. "Thy word have I hid in my heart, that I may not sin against thee."

MORAL DAGUERREOTYPES.

ONE is struck with amazement at the endless variety of expression fixed by the sun, and every instant there may be a new one. Now there is a moral in all this. It shows what a record there may be, when we little think of it, of what we do and what we are.

The sun takes our likenesses by the process of the Daguerreotype. No matter what the expression may be, there it is. There is neither concealment nor flattery. The sun takes exactly what he finds. If it be beauty or deformity, a noble emotion or a vile one, it is all the same to this impartial painter. He will not heighten the one, nor diminish the other, but brings out every feature, with every touch of character. All this without our intervention, at least without our will. There needs but to be given a face, and the sun will take it.

And what if this process were going on, invisibly to us, through some medium interfused in all nature? What if every play of emotion, every attitude, every design revealed in the countenance, every revelation, in fine, of the character in the face and deportment, were thus unalterably taken down, to be reproduced before us? What if every image of ourselves is kept, a copy of it, for the judgment? Suppose that a man could have his past being thus laid before himself in a succession of impressions from childhood to manhood, and from manhood to old age. Would any

one find any difficulty in deciphering the whole character from such marks ?

Nay, sometimes a man would need to have only a single expression of countenance brought before him, a single attitude, in order to wake up conscience, and throw open the door to a whole gallery of evil doings and feelings in his past existence. Perhaps such a series of Daguerreotypes may be among the materials in the book of judgment at the last day. With more accuracy than that with which the most perfect series of maps or views present the face and scenery of a country, men may find their whole past being reproduced before them.

A GOOD OLD HYMN.

DISTEMPER, FOLLY, AND MADNESS OF SIN.

1. SIN, like a venomous disease,
 Infects our vital blood ;
The only balm is sovereign grace,
 And the physician, God.
2. Our beauty and our strength are fled,
 And we draw near to death ;
But Christ the Lord recalls the dead
 With his almighty breath.
3. Madness, by nature, reigns within,
 The passions burn and rage ;
Till God's own Son, with skill divine,
 The inward fire assuage.
4. We lick the dust, we grasp the wind,
 And solid good despise ;
Such is the folly of the mind,
 Till Jesus makes us wise.

We care not who criticizes this hymn, or what authority pronounces concerning it, or what collection rejects it, or what music master stumbles at it. *It is one of the best hymns in the language.* It is truth expressed with great vigor, and in good taste. It takes strong hold of the mind, and answers to its deep convictions in regard to sin. Sin *is* a venomous disease, madness *does* reign within, we *do* lick the dust and grasp the wind, and nothing but divine grace can cure us. And we like to have such truth handled, even in lines of poetry, "without mittens." It is good to have the poet speak out strongly, even though he may lay

himself open to captious objections. Sin *is* a venomous disease ; we *are* dust-eaters and wind-graspers.

On the other hand, the opposite side of the picture is presented with equal truth and beauty. The Physician, the grace, the medicine, are brought to view. And this is done with so much skill in each of the stanzas, that the alternation is very striking, and would render this hymn peculiarly adapted to be sung by the choir in responses, or to be sung with such corresponding alternations in the expression of the music, as would render it exceedingly impressive.

We must confess, that the taste which would reject such a hymn as this, is over-rigid for us. It contains in the original six stanzas. It is not necessary to print them all, nor to sing them all, though five of them are very good. But the four which we have given are admirable. And we do maintain that it is not the business of a hymn-composer, or a hymn-book maker to be consulting the organist or the tune-master, and inquiring of him how he shall regulate the expression of religious truth and feeling. A pretty business it is, indeed, if before the poet can choose the strong word which best conveys the strength of his idea or feeling, he is to run to the leader of the choir to ask how it will *set* in music ! And a still prettier business it is, if, when a hymn has been written, rugged and stern it may be, but deeply expressive, you are to have it ground down at the instigation of some sage professor of music, because, forsooth, it is not smooth enough—does not sing *easy* !

Let every man therein abide in the same calling where-with he was called, and let not Watts and Cowper be sent to dance attendance upon the fancies of modern musical composers, or systematic theologians, however excellent they may be.

READINGS BY THE WAYSIDE

AND

AN EVENING'S CONVERSATION ON THE HUDSON.

I.

WE were reading concerning Joseph of Arimathea, how he hewed a new sepulchre out of the rock, *for himself*. He little thought, when he was doing this, that he was preparing a place for the body of the Saviour. So those who are Christ's shall often have the privilege of laboring for him, even when they see no farther end than their own necessities or death. As all things shall work together for good to those who love God, so all things that they do shall work in the end for God's glory. Hewing tombs or building houses, if the heart is right, they shall do all for Christ.

But a great many men do good without wishing it, and then they have no more concern in it than the wires of the telegraph have with their transmitted tidings. The heart must be right. Angry men, that swear at God, do not mean to glorify him, and yet God makes even the wrath of man to praise him. A great many men do some good in their lives, without knowing it, without intending it, at random and by accident; just as squirrels plant acorns for their own eating, which afterwards grow up into oaks. A great many of the oaks, which God takes to build the ships of his providence and the highway of the gospel, are thus planted and grown by the care of human selfishness.

But only good men have a *heart* as well as a *hand* in accomplishing God's purposes. A wretched thing it is for an immortal soul to be used in a great enterprise, and afterwards by the necessity of its own selfishness, to be thrown away.

II.

Again we were reading concerning the young man in the gospel, who came to Christ *running*. Men that expect to be saved by their works sometimes move quicker in what seems to be the right way than others, but the heart is not right. He came running, though his heart was filled with this world, because he expected to be saved by what he had done and would do. He came running, because he intended to have the gospel and the world together. But if he had had to give up the world and his great riches before beginning to come, he would have set out slowly. He would have walked first, and afterwards ran. It would have been difficult first, but easy afterwards. Now it seemed easy first, but was difficult afterwards. He had to go back, and get through the eye of the needle. But no man can either run through it, or jump through it, nor can there be a railroad through it, nor indeed can anything get through it but a broken heart, and that goes through by faith.

III.

In a ship at sea, and in a rapid talk on board a steamer, it does not take much time to go over a wide space of thought. Men may almost run through the *omne scibile* of theology and science in a certain way. It whiles away the time wonderfully to have an argument of interest, however glancingly it be pursued. The mind sometimes just dots like a telegraph; a few catch-words or

germs of thought, and it is off to another subject. I was sitting, with a Christian friend and brother, and something of inward sympathy or external object or event had led our thoughts impressively to the relation between the divine attributes and the human mind and character. I was deeply interested in my friend's train of thought, which, with the interspaces of my responses was very much as follows:—

The holiness of God! what a subject! how little sense of it in men's minds, and how overpowering has the realization of it proved to the best of men! The prophet Isaiah, for example. For ought we know, he was in very "comfortable frames" of experience, but when he has seen the vision, and heard the cry, Holy, holy, holy, there is no more strength or courage in him. Wo is me, for I, a man of unclean lips, have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!

And is not this, in another way, the experience of every man, who realizes his own sinfulness, and has at the same time any proper sense of God's holiness? I, so sinful a creature, says the Christian to himself, I, who find it so difficult to keep my heart fixed on God, so easy to wander from him, my soul so often cleaving to the dust, so laboriously rising, if at all, towards heaven; what should I do, how could I stand in the immediate presence of a holy God? It seems impossible, that if I should die now, I could be admitted to behold him and enjoy him.

Yes, the soul almost finds itself saying with Peter, when it thinks of these things, Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord! And nothing but the grace of Christ, and a full faith in his blood, with the experience of its cleansing efficacy, can break down this separating wall, and enable the soul to come to God with the spirit of adoption; for any of God's attributes are overwhelming; in any of them a finite mind is lost, and a guilty mind is miserable.

There is the simple eternity of God. There is no under-

standing it. A finite mind *cannot* understand it. And after millions of ages have rolled away, it will still be as incomprehensible as ever, to the highest intelligences. The mind pursues it sometimes to the verge of madness.

And the incomprehensibility of God, and the nature of the human mind, show that nothing less than God can satisfy the soul, while at the same time the holiness of God would make the guilty soul miserable.

That nothing less than God can satisfy the soul is plain on the slightest consideration of the matter. To all finite things and employments the mind will become accustomed, and would be *so* accustomed during the lapse of ages, as to be wearied of them all. Suppose the engineer of this boat were shut up to his employment for a thousand years. It would be torture to him, from the mere monotony. And if an immortal mind were the regent of a whole material universe, and were shut up to that, *without God*, there would come a time, in the course of eternity, when the monotony would be intolerable. If such a thing could be conceived, as that there were no God, immortality would go about the universe panting after God, dying for want of God. Nothing but God can satisfy the soul.

But what, when to this you add the consideration of a holy God and a sinful soul! Where in the universe can a soul that does not love God go, to get out of the way of him? Everything in the universe will bring him to mind, even if consciousness and conscience did not. Everything will speak of him. The soul must love God, or in the bare want of that love, if there were no other hell, it would be miserable. It would be ever in the presence of an enemy. Just suppose that the builder of this boat had put his name and idea on every part of it, in all these ornaments, all these pictured panels, so that wherever the eye should turn, it would encounter nothing but what brought the name and character of the builder to view; and suppose that a mortal enemy of this builder should

have to take passage in this boat, should be shut up in it, where every one is speaking of the builder and praising his skill continually, and where the eye or the mind cannot rest without being reminded of him. He would wish for another boat. He could not endure it. So with the soul and God. An enemy of God would wish to be out of the universe. But there is no other boat, and God is everywhere.

The conversation then passed to the 7th of Romans, and the jejuneness and poverty of the method of interpretation, which would take an unconverted man as the subject of the experience at the close of it, "I find then a law in my mind," &c. "I delight in the law of God after the inward man," "O wretched man that I am," &c. "What I hate that I do," &c. Where in the world ever yet was the unconverted sinner who hated sin? What unconverted man ever hates sin, except by the mere experience of its evil consequences?

How exquisitely beautiful is the Christian Poet Cowper's Essay on Conversation! What admirable sense, wit, humor, piety, delicacy of thought, refinement and depth of feeling!

But conversation, choose what theme we may,
And chiefly when religion leads the way,
Should flow like waters after summer showers,
Not as if raised by mere mechanic powers.

How refreshing are such showers, and the brooks that gladden the earth, running in green pastures. A fountain in a park, set playing according to a city ordinance at certain hours, is a thing to gaze at, and the children with their nurses run round it delighted. But a running brook among the woods and meadows,—that is the perfect image of a natural stream of talk, especially Christian talk, flowing from the abundance of a heart renewed by grace. The Poet Cowper would not sadden the social scene, but he regarded the proper medium between the wise man's sad-

ness and the fool's laughter as hard to hit, though his own native humor was always sparkling, even in the midst of gloom. How beautiful the conclusion of his Poem on this subject !

But though life's valley be a vale of tears,
A brighter scene beyond that vale appears,
Whose glory, with a light that never fades,
Shoots between scattered rocks and opening shades,
And while it shows the land the soul desires,
The language of the land she seeks inspires.
Thus touched, the tongue receives a sacred cure
Of all that was absurd, profane, impure ;
Held within modest bounds, the tide of speech
Pursues the course that Truth and Nature teach ;
No longer labors merely to produce
The pomp of sound, or tinkle without use.
Where'er it winds, the salutary stream,
Sprightly and fresh, enriches every theme,
While all the happy man possessed before,
The gift of Nature, or the classic store,
Is made subservient to the grand design
For which Heaven formed the faculty divine.
So, should an idiot, while at large he strays,
Find the sweet lyre on which an artist plays,
With rash and awkward force the chords he shakes,
And grins with wonder at the jar he makes.
But let the wise and well-instructed hand
Once take the shell beneath his just command,
In gentle sounds it seems as it complained
Of the rude injuries it late sustained ;
Till, tuned at length to some immortal song,
It sounds Jehovah's name, and pours his praise along.

Let your speech be *always with grace*, an Apostle says, seasoned with salt. This does not exclude occasional mirthfulness, but commands that it be always pure and innocent. There may be great excellence in hearty laughter, especially when it is irresistible. Laughing is said to be good for the health, and doubtless it is, if not immoderate ; good for the health both of body and mind.

Every good laugh, some old French writer remarked, adds one link to the chain of our existence. But there is a great difference between hearty laughter, and friv-

olous laughter; and the laughter of fools is like the crackling of thorns under a pot; a most pithy comparison. A man to hear the snapping of such fuel, would think there must be a great fire; it would boil any pot in creation; but after all it is nothing but noise without heat, nor is anything more wearisome. Sensible laughter, on the other hand, is excellent in its place.

PRAYER AND FASTING.

This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.—What kind? A kind of hard, inveterate devils, that get into the heart and stay there. They used of old to take the form of lunatics, and often cast men into the fire, and often into the water. But they have changed somewhat their mode of operation, and having become more refined and quiet, more cunning and less tangible, are far more difficult to be cast out. They know better how to keep concealed, and how to act without violence. They used to inhabit only the hearts of pagans, and men dead in trespasses and sins, but since they have tried successfully the experiment of going into a heart empty and swept and garished, and set up an establishment there, they often steal into the hearts of God's own people, yea, sometimes seven devils of them together, making no noise, but all so quietly and gradually, that the poor deceived heart does not even know their entrance.

But when they have so got in, it is sad havoc that they make with a man's piety. They fill the heart with tombs and desert places, they cast out its warm affections, and introduce habits of coldness and conformity to this world. They go so far, oftentimes, as to make secret prayer and family prayer to become a mere form and a burthen, and the word of God a sealed, unattractive book. Sometimes for a season they get so completely the mastery, that there is nothing in the heart or the habits that can be called secret prayer at all. But when this is the case, then gen-

erally they are on the eve of some daring and riotous outbreak. They will take possession of men thus secretly mastered, as if they were swine, and will make them run violently down the steep places of their passions into the sea and perish in the waters. And they who do not go thus outwardly lunatic are none the less to be pitied, so long as the devils stay secretly within them, and wander from room to room, eating up all the piety they can find, and destroying all the soul's spiritual power and comfort.

This kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting. But a man who has had these devils a long time, gets entirely out of the habit of such prayer and fasting as are requisite to overcome them. They are like rats, that stay and thrive in houses where there is much feasting and good cheer. Where there is little prayer and fasting, they have all things to their own mind, and grow strong and multiply. Then it becomes more and more difficult for the man that entertains these devils to pray and fast; but yet prayer and fasting become more and more necessary, if he would ever get back the command over himself, if he would have the Lord Jesus overcome and bind and cast out the devils, and the Holy Spirit enter and make the heart's chambers his own pure and peaceful abode.

In all spiritual duties, when there is the greatest necessity for them by reason of the sad declining state of the heart, then they are the most tedious and difficult. It is so with fasting and prayer, when there are many devils. And sometimes the whole church gets into such a state that you might as easily move a mountain with a bodkin, as set it of a truth to fasting and prayer. When there has been a long period of worldliness, comfort and ease, when Ephraim in prosperity has got settled on his lees, it is a very difficult thing to disturb him. The mere appointment of a day of fasting and prayer will not do it. The mere formal *observance* of a day of prayer and fasting will not do it. No, not though there be a good attendance on

such a day, and good prayer-meetings attending it, and good Christians going without their dinners, and congratulating themselves that there is once more a fast day in the church. Oh no, that will not do it. Many a man may go without his dinner to frighten the devils, but invite them all back again at supper. Oh no, unless the fasting comes from the heart, and the heart weeps and prays in secret, there is nothing gained. *Real* fasting and prayer is *hard* work, when the evils in the heart have grown quietly and unperceived, and have lain undisturbed in a period of worldly conformity.

Alas! a man has to buckle on his armor, and labor and tug, and strive, before he even finds himself in such a state that he can *begin* to pray and fast in earnest. Depend upon it, ye Christians who have been fasting and praying, because such a season has been appointed, that your work is but commenced in the observance of such a day. It is a season given you to start from, not a journey gained. It is a signal, at which you are to enter into your closet, and shut your door, and knock, and weep, and pray, day after day, day after day. Now, if you begin to do *this* in the observance of a set day with others, you are indeed doing a great work. You have adopted a fast, such as God chooses, you are engaged in a work which the Saviour loves to see, and if you persevere, the devils will give way before you, and the Holy Spirit will fill your heart with power, and peace, and joy. But doubtless you must do this as an individual, and not in reliance upon church meetings. You must do it for **YOUR OWN HEART**, and not merely because the church needs reviving. The church *does* need reviving, but remember, it is because *you* need reviving.

FIXTURES OF CHARACTER.

THERE is in life the period of seeds, and the period of results or harvests. The period of seeds is the germinating period. That which the soul receives deep into itself in that period, grows up, and is developed, as a *part* of itself, and forms the character at the period of harvest. But if the seed-period be neglected or abused, and then, at the period of harvest, or what ought to be that period, the period of results, you attempt the recurrence of a seed-period, it will be a failure; the seed does not germinate, but rots, or if it germinate, it dies without fruit, without being a fixture in the character. Almost everything that falls into the ground but just goes to the nourishment and strengthening of that which had got its fixture and its growth before; or if the seed scattered seem to take root, it is but a feeble, thin, stunted underbrush, around the trunks and beneath the shadow of the old great trees. After those fixtures rise to a certain height and age, they despotize over everything else in the character. We go on, indeed, sowing seed all through life, and each successive period of life is in a most impressive reality a period of probation and of seeds for the next period; because, what we were and did yesterday, is continually coming out in consequences to-day; but the grand seed period, the period of the oaks that build the ships in which our fortunes are embarked for eternity, the period of all the commanding fixtures and features of character, is ordinarily but one, and that one ordinarily early.

That early seed-period, and the germinating and growing period that follows, is imaginative, romantic, full of rich powers and tendencies. Nettles will grow, with grand spreading flowers, to the size of a forest, if you sow those ; rich fruits and magnificent trees will grow, if you sow those. The germinating, springing power, in our immortal nature, is in one sense omnipotent ; it *will* be exercised, if not for good, then for evil, and no created agency can restrain it ; it works for eternity, and with an intensity, with which perhaps only an immortal nature *could* work. The roots of our earliest habits twine themselves all about our immortality, and the trunk of character, strengthened by such roots, is immovable, and the branches spread themselves out over all our being. Whatever, during the period of susceptibility and growing power, is implanted, takes strong hold, and if evil, becomes so omnipotent that God only can cut it away, and if good, it is almost as hard to be eradicated when once firmly set, but grows on even against the tendencies of a deformed nature. So prodigiously, intensely energetic, is the susceptible period and growing power of our being. While it lasts, almost anything can be done with it ; but by and by the susceptible and growing power is past ; past, as to new things, because almost every principle has been in turn tried, and the soul is fully engaged with what it has settled down upon, and the power of the being works portentously in the increase of that, but takes hold of nothing new.

Our blessed Lord took young men for his Apostles. He could make anything out of them then ; it was the suggestive period, the power-period in the formation of character.

We say the *suggestive* period. We mean not the period in which the mind itself makes, puts forth, or proposes suggestions, but the period in which suggestions are enthusiastically, romantically, eagerly entertained, and become the source of other suggestions. We use the expression,

a suggestive book. It means a book, that to a thoughtful mind touches a great many springs of thought and feeling, pronounces the *open sesame*, to a great many doors in the rocky but gem-enclosing caverns of the soul; a book that sets the mind upon tracks of investigation, and calls up shadows of prophetic revelation before it, making it earnestly inquisitive; a book that like a flash of lighting in a dark summer's night reveals for the moment a whole horizon. Now such a book ordinarily affects a young mind and an old one in a very different manner. In a young mind it meets a growing, germinating power, an enthusiastic, imaginative, impressible, impulsive tendency, and carries the mind onward to results. In an old mind it stops at the threshold where you have laid it; it enters not into the activity of the being. Old men may *make* suggestions, but cannot so easily receive them. If, during *their* suggestive period, they received and acted upon good, rich, noble, powerful suggestions, under which magnificent habits of character and life were formed, then, when their own susceptibility to impressions, new impressions of thought and feeling, their germinating period, is gone, they will still be able to communicate power, to electrify others; their sowing time in the hearts and minds of others shall never be gone, if their own receiving time and growing time *from* others was rightly improved. Hence the Apostle John could touch the keys of revelation when he was old, could pour the light of truth divine upon the minds of others, even when he had *received* all that he ever would or could receive *from* others. Hence Dr. Payson, when dropping his mantle of mortality, could throw the mantle of his piety, and the flame of his rejoicing soul upon the watchers around him, long after he had ceased to receive any new suggestions or excitements from the things of earth, or the discipline of heaven.

Now this suggestive period seems with some to be longer, and with some shorter, just as the growing and developing

period is various with different individuals. But it seems to be a *limited* period with all. That is, there is a period of receptivity and growth, looking to a period of bestowment and results, of harvest and of fruits. The period of receptivity and growth stops for the most part where the period of harvests and of fruits is expected to begin, or ought to begin. Just so, there is the period of increase and of receptivity in the human life, and then the period of decline and of spending. The energies of this mortal frame are first gathered and compacted, then thrown off in preparation for the grave. First in our being is the period of Genesis, then Law, then Prophecy, then Fulfilment and Revelation of eternal results. Out of the nature of the law which we have made our own, working in us, whether good or evil, in the period of receptivity, germination, and growth, springs the prediction of the future, never mistaken, never annulled.

SIMPLICITY.

SIMPLICITY is a thing that cannot be learned. It must come either from the nature of nature, or the nature of grace; if it be copied, it ceases to be simplicity, and becomes affectation. But it is absolutely essential to the highest excellence of character; all is but varnish without it. Faith in God is child-like simplicity, parent of strength. Without it, all knowledge is vain; the light of the mere understanding, to use the strong image of the Poet Cowper, is only like a candle in a scull. With the same deep meaning, Mr. Coleridge once said that all products of the mere reflective faculties partake of death.

Child-like simplicity is clear-sighted, and sees into the soul of things; it sees also the soul of beauty in little things. Simplicity goes hand in hand with humility, and they two have great insight and great enjoyment together. Pride and self-complacency draw a veil before insight, and then the man goes about well-nigh blindfolded, yet thinking that he sees all things. Such men often *overlook* things, because they are so plain before them, and for the very reason of their simplicity and easiness to be understood. Men are always looking for some great thing. Tell a proud man to go into the fields and bring you home the sweetest and most beautiful flower he can find, and probably he will go with his head high up in the air, hunting after the Magnolia. He may tread upon five thousand violets by the way, and never see them, never be conscious that precisely the most beautiful and the sweetest flower is that he is trampling under foot; and when he returns, if you ask him if he saw any violets, very likely he will say no.

PART THIRD.

CRITICAL AND SPECULATIVE.

The fears, the hopes, the remembrances, the anticipations, the inward and outward experience, the belief and the faith of a Christian, form of themselves a philosophy and a sum of knowledge, which a life spent in the grove of Academus, or the painted Porch, could not have attained or collected.

AIDS TO REFLECTION.

CHARACTERISTICS

OF

THE CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER.*

I AM called to speak of the memory of a Christian Philosopher. It is a noble title, nobly won, though so few in our fallen world have deserved it. I do not feel that I am called to eulogize, but to set before you some among many virtues of a man, whom it seemed to us as if we could ill spare, out of a class from which, in this country, the loss of such an one must be long and painfully felt, because, as yet our institutions have produced, and God's mercy has granted, so few; and he especially seemed to have just ripened for effort and usefulness.

We do not, to-day, think of him as a spirit in heaven, though he is there; still less do we think of him in the grave, where "the shell of the flown bird has mouldered;" but we think of him as here; we seem to feel his presence in the spot where so many have listened to his instructions, and still are ruled by his spirit from its urn; these scenes, so familiar to him living, bring him into the midst of us this day, just as he was on earth, while absorbed in those profound meditations in which he delighted.

I have said that I do not feel that I am called to eulogize,

* A Discourse commemorative of the virtues and attainments of Rev. James Marsh, D.D., late President, and Professor of Moral and Intellectual Philosophy in the University of Vermont; delivered before the Alumni of the University, at their Annual Meeting, in August, 1843, and published at their request.

for this is needless, and the occasion demands much more ; so does the memory of our departed instructor and friend. You will bear with me then, if now, not confining myself to the review of Dr. Marsh's personal and mental excellencies, I dwell, for a little space, upon some of the requisites essential to the character of a Christian philosopher. A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER ! The highest qualities that can adorn humanity, must go to make up such a character ; and yet, such a being, we say it without hesitation, and not in the spirit of eulogy, but of justice, was Dr. Marsh. And in dwelling upon these qualities of mind and opinion as well as of the heart, while I shall speak with particular reference to Dr. Marsh, I shall also speak as I should have been glad to do in his own presence, without any such reference suggested ; although, as I passed along in my enumeration of particulars, every mind might say within itself of this excellence Dr. Marsh was an example.

I. I begin, then, this enumeration, with the very obvious and general truth, that no man can be a Christian *philosopher*, without being himself, by personal union with Christ, through the regenerating influences of the Holy Spirit, individually, in the New Testament sense, and not by nominal courtesy, a CHRISTIAN. Philosophy itself needs regenerating ; and it is not probable that any but a true and deep Christian will ever do much to regenerate it.

We might suggest many reasons. Humility is requisite ; but the unregenerate mind is full of pride. In the region of the Reason and the Understanding, unregenerate minds of superior acuteness may speculate well, may deal skilfully with abstractions, and marshal the shadows of the cave ; but when we come to the province of conscience, the will, and the affections, then comes in the great fact of human depravity, with lights and shades, which the unregenerate mind either does not, or will not see, or is unwilling to acknowledge and follow. Instead of taking their

stand-point in Christianity, and reasoning towards philosophy, most men have taken their stand-point in philosophy, and reasoned towards Christianity. Hence the world has been greatly plagued with a philosophical Christianity, but a Christian philosophy scarcely, as yet, exists. Christianity has been baptized in philosophy, instead of philosophy in Christianity; or if philosophy has been baptized, it has been merely *christened*, not christianized; it has received the figment of a baptismal regeneration, rather than the reality of a new celestial birth. A so-called philosophical Christianity may be received from the hands of rationalists and deists; a Christian philosophy can be received only from a Christian mind.

The remark of Clemens Alexandrinus concerning the heretical philosophers of his day, has been too true of philosophic names in every age; that they were far more anxious to appear to be philosophers, than really and truly to philosophize; more desirous to gain the reputation of philosophy, than the reality. *Inani ergo sapientiæ opinione elati, perpetuo litigant, aperte ostendentes se magis curare ut videantur philosophi, quam ut philosophantur.* In such hands a philosophical Christianity has proved as inefficient for men's moral reformation, as it has been erroneous both in philosophy and Christianity. The body of philosophers, it is quaintly but truly remarked by Thomas Halyburton; and the remark includes not only those whom he had in his eye in his own day, but many who have flourished since; "the body of philosophers are indeed like weak watermen on a strong stream; they look one way but are carried another. Though they pretend they aim at the ruining of vice, yet really they do it no hurt, save that they speak against it. A few of the best of them, being ashamed to be found among the rest, (swimming, or rather carried down the stream on the surface, that is, in open vice,) have dived to the bottom, but really make as much way under water as the others above."

In the earliest ages of the Church, there was such a pretended philosophical Christianity. Perhaps, indeed, there never was a period in the world's history, when there prevailed such an extraordinary enthusiasm in the pursuit of philosophy, as in the age of the apostles. And everywhere it was philosophy falsely so called. There never was a period in which so many different sects were contending together on one and the same arena. The world was a hubbub of philosophers; everything intellectual, everything moral, everything religious, took that turn. There was very little light, and what there was, was fast becoming darkness. The culminating point of light in the world's intellect, apart from revelation, had probably been reached in Plato, and every step after him was a retrograde one. Every new mixture in the cauldron of Alexandrian Eclecticism produced only a thicker scum of error. Every turn in the wild medley of philosophic opinions only made confusion worse confounded. Yet philosophy was the fashion; it was learning, it was education, it was refinement, it was *γνῶσις*, the knowledge of God and of creation, of good and evil, and every religionist must be a philosopher.

Now it is not possible that there should be a philosophical Christianity for the mind, till there is a New Testament Christianity for the affections; the first can have no place in the mind till the last is established in the heart. And herein is one reason doubtless to be found, for the entire absence of philosophical speculation from the New Testament itself, and for the constant warnings of the Apostles against such speculation. It was not merely because so great a portion of the so-called philosophical speculation that prevailed at that time was utterly false, but because the world's mind was not prepared even for a true philosophy, and could not be, until it was imbued with a true religion.

It was into the midst of that agitated chaos of society, that philosophical fermentation of the world's mind of which we have spoken, that the first disciples of Christ were thrown,

to begin their spiritual conflict. We may find in the state of things around them, reason enough why illiterate men, so called, were chosen ; if any had been taken from the schools, a constant miracle must have been in exercise all along the course of inspiration, to preserve them from perpetually mingling the fanaticism and the folly of philosophic speculation with the theory and truth of Christianity. We may say, indeed, that there was such an exercise, otherwise we could have had no pure unmingled inspiration. Amidst these strong tendencies, with not only the Greeks, but the whole world, agape after wisdom, the disciples were set down simply to preach the gospel. It *was* a miracle that they preached it, that they did not instantly, on the death of Christ, set up a school of philosophy. But there they stood, simple disciples of an atoning Saviour, and preached the Cross, knowing nothing but that, and determined to know nothing among men save Christ and him crucified. Thus they stood through one generation at least, simple preachers and not philosophers, and so the doctrines of Christianity were fairly and fully excogitated, put before the world in freshness and simplicity. It was a wonderful spectacle, a sublime sight, this light amidst darkness, this simplicity amidst error, this order amidst confusion, these twelve men going about like little children, and talking truth as simple as the daylight, as blessed and as easy to be understood, amid such a hubbub of pretensions and noises, such universal distortion of mind, such admiration and worship of philosophic darkness. They were faithful to the Cross, and so the canon of the New Testament was fixed, and the truths of the Cross were fully and eternally revealed, without mixture or sanction of human error. The Orb of Light was hung up, whatever error darkened men's horizon beneath it.

But in the multitude those pagan, philosophic, speculative tendencies remained, and Christianity had to meet them ; and some minds were speedily brought into her

bosom deeply tinged with them, and soon many were beguiled from the simplicity of Christ. Heresy entered with philosophy. Learned converts from paganism brought with them from their schools the habit of subtle speculation. Gnostic, Cabbalistic, Neoplatonic allegory began to be in fashion; professedly Christian teachers contended with unbaptized pagans for the palm of philosophy; that is, they claimed it for Christianity as a thing to be desired, and the Christian fathers sought to maintain a philosophic reputation. The early Christian writers themselves seem indeed to have retired backward from the very foot of the Cross, from the very blaze of inspiration, into the darkness of pagan philosophy. To step out from the New Testament into the writings of the fathers, is to step from a region of light, order, certainty and beauty, into a region of dim, disastrous twilight, where, as the shades of evening gather, the forms of superstition thicken, and the common sense and the simple spiritual sense, so rich and full in the pages of the New Testament, almost cease from existence. The forms of divine truth, that is, of truth revealed through the medium of the Cross, are dim and indistinct. In proof of this, let any one look through the writings of the fathers, to trace the great doctrine of justification by faith, so early lost, and at length so profoundly lost in the Romish system, and so late discovered in the glorious and blessed Reformation, after a thousand years. Let any sound-minded Christian take up any work of any Christian father, the most evangelical, and compare it with any practical or speculative treatise of Baxter, Howe, Leighton, or other modern Christian writers, and he will be sensible of the vast inferiority of the first to these last ages of Christianity, in the knowledge and possession of the truth and spirit of the Scriptures. There is, perhaps, quite as strong a contrast between the Christian writers of the seventeenth century, and the early Christian doctors, as that depicted with so much power and beauty by Mr. Taylor, between

the books of the Jewish prophets, and those of the Christian fathers after the apostolic age. "It must be acknowledged," he observes, "that the writers of the ancient dispensation were such as those should be, who were looking onward towards the bright day of gospel splendor; while the early Christian doctors were just such as one might well expect to find those, who were looking onward towards that deep night of superstition, which covered Europe during the middle ages. The dawn is seen to be gleaming upon the foreheads of the one class of writers; while a sullen gloom overshadows the brows of the other."

If, now, the history of Christianity be for ages only a history of its corruptions, the history of philosophy for the same period must be at best but a history of its mistakes. Accordingly, much of the history of philosophy must be occupied with three great sources of error;—a neglect of that which seems to be known, but is not; a vain pursuit of that which cannot be known; a proud endeavor to reduce that which is supernaturally revealed, to the level of what is within the compass of our faculties. It was not designed that Christianity should make the world philosophical, till it had made it Christian. But the history of the scholastic and middle ages show the world striving after philosophy, when it has not even become imbued with the elements of Christianity. The one is impossible without the other; and the consequence is the occupying the domain of philosophy with inane and useless, though subtle questions. Accordingly, a great reformation in philosophy commenced with the reformation in religion; and it may be safely predicted that just in proportion as the world grows in the knowledge and love of God practically, the human mind will become known to itself, and all knowledge will advance towards that unity, which we know to be possible only in the union of the mind, the will, the affections with Christ in God.

II. Now, passing from this general head, I shall mention, as a second fundamental requisite in the character of a Christian philosopher, the habit of self-discipline, including especially that of self-examination. Here Dr. Marsh was remarkable for his patience, severity, and excellence. The habits of his mind were meditative and profound; the habits of his piety being equally so, he was a rare example of the union of severe intellectual and spiritual discipline. His tendency in meditation was more strongly subjective than objective, more to thoughts than things, more to motives than actions; this tendency, we may see plainly, helped and forwarded his communion with God and himself; and the habit of spiritual self-examination as a Christian duty, aided the habit of intellectual self-examination as a philosophical business and study. As a sincere Christian, exercising himself herein always to maintain a conscience void of offence towards men and towards God, his habits of self-examination, both intellectual and spiritual, were fearless and impartial. It is a great thing not to be *afraid* of self-examination.

On this subject, I often think of Dr. Donne's profound and condensed stanza :

But we know ourselves least; mere outward shows
Our minds so store,
That our souls, no more than our eyes, disclose
But form and color. Only he who knows
Himself, knows more.

Some men train their minds well, look at abstractions sharply, accustom themselves to subtle distinctions, and to a busy, patient, intellectual self-examination. But they neglect the moral and spiritual examination of their being, as they have neglected from youth up habitually its personal spiritual cultivation. No such man is fitted to be a philosopher. Here is great distortion of the being; it has all grown on one side. Here are great intellectual excrescences, but not the symmetry and beauty, the truth and

certainty, of intellectual life. Here are abstractions, but not realities. And as to all that portion of truth in God and in ourselves, which lies over against the part of our being so neglected, the view of it and the conception of it in the mind of such a philosopher must inevitably be erroneous; and it has so many practical connections and consequences, that the effect of such error spreads even into those intellectual abstractions, in which such minds think they are the subtle masters of certainty.

Other men train their hearts better, but do not accustom themselves to habits of patient abstract thought, nor to the examination of their own intellectual being and processes. They take for granted what other men say; they read systems; their philosophical studies are not their own, but a blind pursuit in the path of others, a dependent following on in the train even of minds that have known nothing of Christianity practically, but have merely wandered in the labyrinths of intellectual subtleties, and therefore cannot possibly be our guides to a Christian philosophy. Such, for the most part, have been our philosophical writers. There has been such a divorce from the Christianizing, not to say humanizing, affections, in their writings, that the generalizing mind of Burke found occasion to make the remark that nothing can be conceived more hard than the heart of a thorough-bred metaphysician. These minds have been the tenants of Goethe's circle, and still are. "I tell you, a fellow that speculates, is like a brute driven in a circle on a barren heath, by an evil spirit, whilst fair green meadow lies everywhere around." Such is speculation apart from Christianity. Lord Bacon has written some pregnant sentences, as to the corrosive influences of knowledge without love. It is hardly possible that any great reformation in philosophy can come from such sources; nor is it such minds that can be safely followed—minds divorced from hearts, minds neglectful of spiritual self-examination, and hearts unacquainted with themselves.

There is a great want of self-examination. It is in our very nature ; I mean our guilty nature, for a perfectly holy being could not find the work of self-examination difficult. Our habits are those of inward neglect. And not only so, but some men's habits of opinion, the cast of their religious system, are so contrary to truth, subjective as well as revealed, that they dare not go into thorough self-examination either morally or intellectually. If they should, they would be sure to strike upon some of those great reefs of thought and consciousness buried in the ocean of man's being, and their system must suffer shipwreck, especially if it be built upon the assumed purity of man, and the rejection of a divine atoning Mediator. A man who is afraid of God, of his just and holy character as revealed in his word, and who is prejudiced against a system of truth which has a severe side towards himself on account of his depraved nature, is not the being to become a philosopher, or to examine his own mind in an impartial, honest, scrutinizing manner. Hence there lies against the investigations of most of the great minds that have been the monarchs of abstraction an objection, an antecedent probability, that as they are wrong towards God practically, they cannot be right towards man intellectually ; their practical errors will produce errors even in intellectual abstractions. They are unsafe guides, even in a philosophy of nature. There is a concealed magnet near such a mind's compass, that in its investigations turns the needle out of its proper direction. The witnesses are interested. It has been said by Mr. Coleridge, that "the chameleon darkens in the shade of him who bends over it to ascertain its colors." But what if there be a moral hue in the observer, reflected upon the thing observed, the quality of the subject transferred to the object ?

What we need is the union of habits of intellectual abstraction with spiritual truth, with devout feeling. With us there is perhaps more of the devout feeling, but less of

the patient intellectual discipline. But this is absolutely necessary for the mental philosopher. Discipline of the mind is needed, more than most men are willing to undergo; more than most, even of our students, are accustomed to. For students in general are students of external books and things, and not of the constitution and movements of their own minds. They pursue paths that have been traced out for them; they do not enter the forest with axe in hand, to cut down the underbrush and make paths for themselves to new points, or their own paths to old points; they travel the beaten road. Now it is a truth that paths long travelled not only lose the interest, which by novelty they once possessed, but they even lose that power over the mind, which the things of intrinsic value and curiosity that lie along in them deserve to exercise. In the mind's investigations, an ell of one's own is worth a mile of another's. Intellectual regions become as hacknied, as infested with *cicerones*, as crusted over with custom, as the regions of fashionable travel. Guide-books and hand-books become so familiar, and so insufferably minute, that the possibility of a fresh discovery is anticipated, and the genial excitement of the mind, even by surprising truth, is rendered very difficult.

Truth, Democritus said, was a deep well; it is a deep sea, that requires experienced and powerful divers, divers that can hold their breath long, or the pearls that lie at the bottom will not be brought up. Many have gone out of their depth, many have lost their breath, many have been taken by devious under-currents, and carried far from the point they have been diving at. By and by their bodies rise and float, here and there upon the surface. They are cast up upon the shores, and other philosophers devoutly bury them. A name is put upon their grave-stones, and the directions are marked, in which they are supposed to have wandered. Men seem perfectly aware of these under-currents in the case of others, but yet they are perpetually

diving into the same, and losing their way, and in their turn dying for want of breath. "Or," says Halyburton, in his sometimes quaint way, "trying to fetch up the truth without diving for it, but with a line too short, they fetch up some weeds that are nourished by their nearness to the waters, and please themselves with those." Yes! It must be confessed, there is a great deal of the sea-weed of philosophy brought up instead of shells and pearls; there are regions, however, where this sort of weed may make a very good compost for the production of better things in the sandy places on one's intellectual premises.

III. Perhaps it is of sufficient importance to mention, as a third characteristic of a Christian Philosopher, that he will take his whole being with him. He must neither leave his Christianity behind, when he goes into his philosophy, nor his philosophy behind, when he goes into his Christianity; if he does either, this proves there is a defect; for true Christianity and true philosophy are the same, and a man's being, the state of his existence, under one influence, cannot contradict the state of his existence under the other. If he cannot take his whole being with him, whether on the one side or the other, he is wrong.

Besides this, there are idiosyncrasies to be guarded against. Some men's natural tendency, their besetting intellectual sin, is to look at things out of themselves, at external relations merely, at the objective instead of the subjective; other some tend to the opposite extreme, and are so occupied with their subjective wants and tendencies, that they see almost nothing else. The first extreme is the greatest evil, doubtless; the last likewise, if half the great body of truth be neglected, will lead to partial and incorrect views.

Dr. Marsh's philosophical investigations show, that while his own tendencies were subjective, and fitted him eminently for patient and profound meditation, he was not less

careful in external observation, calling in science to his aid and making the objective and the subjective reflect, reveal and minister to each other. Minds whose tendencies are exclusively or chiefly to external observation, to the phenomenal out of themselves, and who yield to those tendencies, can have no true conception of a spiritual philosophy. They are neither fitted to understand nor to criticize such a system; what they themselves do not understand, because half their own being has been neglected, they deem in itself unintelligible; what is beyond their own experience, or rather, what has escaped their own notice of their own experience, they set down as mysticism. Some remarks of Mr. Coleridge are strikingly in point. "A system," says he in his *Biographia Literaria*, "the first principle of which it is to render the mind intuitive of the *spiritual* in man, (i. e. of that which lies on the other side of our natural consciousness,) must needs have a great obscurity for those who have never disciplined and strengthened this ulterior consciousness. It must, in truth, be a land of darkness, a perfect anti-Goshen, for men, to whom the noblest treasures of their being are reported only through the imperfect translation of lifeless and sightless notions; perhaps in great part through words which are but the shadows of notions; even as the notional understanding itself is but the shadowy abstraction of living and actual truth. On the IMMEDIATE, which dwells in every man, and on the original intuition, or affirmation of it, (which is likewise in every man, but does not in every man rise into consciousness) all the certainty of our knowledge depends; and this becomes intelligible to no man by the ministry of mere words from without."

The greatest evil in philosophy is that divorce of the heart from the head, of which we have already spoken, from which Dr. Marsh's deep piety, if nothing else, would have preserved him, and concerning which, though at the risk of some appearance of repetition under our present head, I shall

here add something more. Dr. Marsh once quoted a sentence from Lactantius, containing the whole of this evil. "*Naturam hominis hanc Deus ipse voluit, ut duarum rerum cupidus et appetens esset, religionis et sapientiæ. Sed homines ideo falluntur, quod aut religionem suscipiunt omissa sapientia, aut sapientiæ soli student, omissa religione, cum alterum sine altero esse non possit verum.*" This is a great truth. God constituted us to seek religion and wisdom together. But men go to extremes; they either seek religion without wisdom, or they seek wisdom without religion; whereas, the one without the other, cannot possibly be true.

Mr. Coleridge's experience, when he met, among the buyers, and sellers, and money-changers in the temple of intellectual abstractions in Germany, some who came to worship with the heart, is deeply interesting and instructive. Speaking of the writings of Fox and Behmen, he observes that they acted in no slight degree to prevent his mind from being imprisoned within the outline of any single dogmatic system. "They contributed to keep alive the *heart* in the *head*; gave me indistinct, yet stirring and working presentiment, that all the products of the mere reflective faculty partook of DEATH, and were as the rattling twigs and sprays in winter, into which a sap was yet to be propelled, from some root to which I had not penetrated, if they were to afford my soul either food or shelter. If they were too often a moving cloud of smoke to me by day, yet they were always a pillar of fire throughout the night, during my wanderings through the wilderness of doubt, and enabled me to skirt without crossing the sandy deserts of utter unbelief." The true depth and inmost centre of science is never to be gained by those who take the mind alone and leave the heart behind. And as to that root from which alone the sap can come, which is to vivify the products of the reflective faculty, it can be none other than Christ. Without a vital acquaintance with him, no man can pre-

tend to the character of a Christian Philosopher ; and I may add, that however distinguished for intellectual subtlety the philosophers and the students of any nation may be, if the product of the reflective faculty be the curse of a Christless philosophy, the sharpness of intellectual discipline is purchased at a dreadful price. I do not say an *infidel*, but a *Christless* philosophy, which, with whatever concomitants it may grow up, must become one of the greatest curses that can be fastened on the literature of a people.

IV. A fourth requisite, which may be mentioned as characteristic of a Christian philosopher, is a candid and charitable appreciation of other men's points of view, not views simply, but points of view. For this Christian and discriminating candor, Dr. Marsh's mind and heart were remarkable. "This man is in error," he could say, "but I see *how* he has fallen into it; I can see his point of view, and from that point his error was very natural: nay, from that point, it may be but a truth carried to extremes, or one side of a truth without the other. I can convince him of the difficulty." For the exercise of such candor, freedom from self-opinion, and the attitude of a learner are always necessary. Humility of heart, as well as acuteness of intellect, is necessary; and this was one of Dr. Marsh's shining traits.

These qualities were of eminent advantage to him in his duties as a teacher. He was candid almost to an extreme in entertaining objections, and giving them full play and scope. He would often perceive the objection laboring in a student's mind, and would proceed to give it an expression more forcibly and clearly than the student could have done for himself, so that it might, on certain occasions, be said, that he could understand the mind and views of others better than they could themselves. Neither was he afraid to let it be seen, that while teaching others he was himself

a learner. I am reminded of a characteristic anecdote of Dr. Reid, of Scotland. I believe he relates it himself in his lectures on Moral Philosophy. The class were reading Cicero de Finibus, when one of the students came to a hard place, which the doctor himself could not explain. "I thought I had the meaning, gentlemen," said he, "but I have not, and will be obliged to any one who will construe it." A student stood up and translated it, and the doctor expressed his gratitude. Nothing will win the affection and confidence of students more surely than such engaging candor; it is the quality of a truly great mind. Dr. Marsh's intercourse with his students was always that of a friend, and his instructions were rather as a Socratic friendly conversation, than as a formal, *ex Cathedra* statement of the truth. In this way he gained much himself, and others learned more.

The want of this appreciation of other men's points of view, of which I have spoken, has produced much prejudice and self-opinion, which have greatly hindered the progress of truth. The habit of learning from other men's errors, is almost as important as the opposing of them; but for this, it is necessary not only to scrutinize the error as it comes before your own mind, but to see it, if possible, where it springs up, to project yourself, as it were, into another man's associations and position. The power of such appreciation, though it be difficult, and requires a peculiar exercise of mind, does nevertheless exist more than the desire. What we wish to say to an antagonist is this:— You have shown the matter in your position; now come hither, and stand with me, and see it in the light in which I am viewing it. If this habit be good for one side, it is good and truthful for another; and indeed if this rule were adopted, one half the controversies in the world would cease.

It cannot be denied, that in most controversies there is more or less truth on both sides; the silver grey and the

dark green belonging to the same olive leaf. He possesses a rare qualification as a philosopher, who can put himself into the position of those whose minds are taking a different view from his own; who, being in the sun, can project himself into the situation of those who are standing in the shade; or, being in the wind, can project himself into the position of an observer where it is a dead calm.

Dr. Marsh's mind was singularly free from prejudice, and disinterested in pursuit of truth. It was characteristic of him that he shrank from controversy, especially on the subject of religion, though he did not shrink from the expression of his views. "If I were disposed to controversy," said he, "it would, I suppose, be very easy in me to make a noise in the great Babel, but they make enough without my help." He was wise in avoiding controversy. The excitement produced in it is too often distorting and prejudicial, both to the mind and the heart. And even as to pious feeling itself, it is too apt in such cases to become sour, crude, intolerant and caustic. Astronomers tell us that we are nearer to the sun in December than in June; so there is a sort of dog-day fervor in controversial piety, in which the church may be really farther from God than in the dead of winter. And in philosophy, controversialists, going to extremes, are apt to retreat each into an opposite error.

V. It were almost superfluous to speak of Dr. Marsh's profound reverence for the Word of God, his delight in it, his love and submission to it. But inasmuch as this is a characteristic which has rarely belonged to philosophers in this world, and yet is an indispensable requisite in the character of a Christian Philosopher; and as there is a philosophy of tradition as well as of inspiration, and a support, in some quarters, of claims that derogate from and conflict with the claims of the Word of God; I need no apology for dwelling at some length on this subject. The admira-

ble views of Dr. Marsh on the subject of a scriptural religious education, and on the foundation of our national well-being and stability in the Bible, I shall have occasion separately to notice. His personal regard to the Word of God, and his views of its evidence and authority, are what I now refer to; and if I am not mistaken, they embraced some considerations of importance, which I shall for a moment dwell upon.

I repeat, then, at the outset, that an essential characteristic of a Christian Philosopher is the reception of the Scriptures as the Word not of man but of God. I use this phraseology, because it is in the Scriptures themselves, and it will be clearly seen how much is meant by it. There is a far greater dependence of the philosophic mind for its success, for the pertinence, soundness and acuteness of its speculations, on such a reception of the Scriptures, with a corresponding prayerful study of them, such as Dr. Marsh was accustomed to, than is generally imagined. We suspect that Lord Bacon's views of divine inspiration were the source of not a little of his great wisdom; nor is it at all characteristic of a strong mind, or of impartial independent thought, either to cut loose from the Bible, or to hold such lax views of its inspiration, as to make it scarcely more binding than the Koran.

The human mind in relation to the Word of God is like a kite, needing to be confined, in order that it may steadily soar. Not even the Spirit of God lifts up the soul, except as it is confined to the Scriptures. If a mind, in the vague aspirations of a philosophic freedom, chafes at this bondage, and will be released, then it happens as with a boy's paper kite in the air, when the string is broken. For a moment it seems to soar more loftily, then wavers irregularly, and plunges headlong to the earth. Just so, a mind abandoning the Word of God, may seem for a season to be sailing with supreme dominion through regions of original thought, but it soon wavers, plunges, and falls.

There are degrading views of inspiration as unphilosophical and almost as injurious in their tendency, as its entire rejection. One of the most striking instances of prejudice and inconsistency in a philosophic mind, is to be found in the views entertained by Mr. Coleridge in regard to the Word of God; views which would, if driven closely, be as a ploughshare of ruin to the Christian system, or else would land the believer in a pseudo-Romanism, with an infallible church possessing an inspiration denied to the Scriptures, but without which, in themselves, let the inspiration of the church be what it might, the Scriptures would be of no avail. I refer to the publication of the Confessions of an Enquiring Spirit, the least intellectual and the most unphilosophical of all his productions. The true subjective evidence of the Word of God, internal in the scriptures, and subjective in us, is opposed to three false schemes; the scheme which assumes the church as the infallible and only interpreter; the scheme in philosophy, which would reduce the evidences of Christianity to mere miracles and historical testimony; and the scheme which supposes in man a natural spiritual faith, the product even of his unregenerate state.

In speaking of the grounds of our faith in the Word of God, and of the nature of its evidence in the eye of a Christian Philosopher, we begin with the remembrance, that the divine mind, in moving upon our minds, does it ordinarily through the affections. In no other way is faith in us practicable. He that doeth my will shall know of the doctrine whether it be of God. A right state of the affections is essential for the doing of God's will, is a part of it; and there can be no right knowing, no real faith, where heavenly affections do not exist. The Spirit of God moves the mind by the affections, rather than the affections by the mind. The Word of God makes its appeal to the affections, supposes right affections, and shows, *a priori*, the necessity of them, by pre-supposing them.

There is a beautiful analogy in nature. On a bright day in summer, while the west wind breathes gently, you stand before a forest of maples, or you are attracted by a beautiful tree in the open field, that seems a dense clump of foliage. You cannot but notice how easily the wind moves it, how quietly, how gracefully, how lovingly, the whole body of it. It is simply because it is covered with foliage. The same wind rattling through its dry branches in winter, would scarce bend a bough, or only to break it. But now, softly whispering through ten thousand leaves, how gently the whole tree yields to the impression! So it is with the affections, the feelings. They are the foliage of our being, and God's own Spirit moves our mind, our will, by our affections.

Hence the necessity of carefully cherishing and cultivating the affections, if we would be easily moved towards God, and susceptible of the gentle influences of His Spirit. Nothing can supply the place of this foliage. And accordingly, if it have fallen off through early neglect, if a harsh and unkind education have nipped it in the bud, if parental tenderness and care have been wanting, so that either no affections, or evil ones, have place in the being, the tree will be likely to remain a fruitless, unsightly incumbrance, of which God in due time will say, "Cut it down; why cumbereth it the ground?" The more green leaves a man has in his composition, the more easily will the breath of God's Spirit move him. Accordingly the apostle, speaking of some who seemed hardened beyond the possibility of reclaiming, observes that they were *without natural affection*. There was nothing which the Spirit of God might lay hold on to move their being.

Now, in regard to the word of God, and our reception of it, our faith in it, our experience of its realities, our knowledge of its power; it is manifest that there must be right affections towards God, a humble and tender spirit and frame of mind and heart. If there be no such affec-

tions towards God, how is it possible that there should be a hearty acknowledgment of his word? "MY SHEEP hear MY VOICE ; but a stranger's voice will they not hear." It is *my sheep* who hear ; not the goats, nor the wolves, who are not expected to hear, but with terror. It is *my sheep*, who hear, and *my voice*, which alone they will hear, which alone is divine.

We have heard the evidence of the Scriptures likened to that with which a child knows a letter from its father ; but it must be a child, and not a stranger, a child acquainted with its father, and accustomed to communion with him. A child that has wandered from its father's house from the earliest infancy, and disobeyed its parent, nor ever had any communion with him, would neither recognize his handwriting nor his thoughts. How can there be internal evidence, where there is, or has been, no communion of spirit, no previous acquaintance? To know that this is a letter from our Heavenly Father, we must be the children of our Father ; our affections must be warm towards him, and then every line will be full of evidence, full of God. *Evil men understand not judgment, but they that seek the Lord understand all things.* The difficulty is not in the intellect, but in the heart ; and what is needed is not so much a reasoning intellect, as what is called in Scripture an *understanding heart*. *Fides enim debet precedere intellectum, ut sit intellectus fidei premium.* For faith must precede the understanding, that a full understanding may be the reward of faith. Faith being an exercise of the heart, these words of Augustine are right. Mr. Coleridge even applies them to other writings besides the Scriptures. If now, there be no such affection of the heart towards God, towards Christ, how should his voice be recognized ; how should there be a heartfelt and intuitive acknowledgment of his word? *Quantum sumus scimus.* So much as we ARE we KNOW. How deep and entire a truth is this in religion !

It is true, indeed, that the conscience may acknowledge the threatenings of God's Word, without the heart; and for this purpose the prescriptive belief in the Bible as the Word of God, that belief which comes with our education from our very birth, is of immeasurable importance and utility. But this prescriptive belief is very different from faith; it is as different as the credence of human testimony by the understanding, and of divine testimony by the heart. The will can never be submissive to the Word of God, till at the same time its evidence is felt in the affections. If there were right affections towards God, there would be everywhere an instant acknowledgment and love of God's Word, just as a child knows and loves the tones of its father. But it is precisely because of the want of these right affections naturally, that such a prescriptive belief is of so great importance. Some men are prejudiced against the prescriptive belief, against building upon it in any case, until the mind and heart adopt it on historical proof. And hence the external evidences of Christianity have been exalted into a place of undue authority.

But it is absurd to suppose that nothing in religion is to be taught by prescription, by authority; almost everything that we learn must be taught in this way. Our first knowledge of science demands this prescriptive belief, this believing spirit. And will you deny this to the Word of God? You teach your child the nature of electricity. You point it to the lightning. You bring your child to the electrical machine, and communicate its shock. Your child's knowledge of electricity is somewhat different after the shock from what it was before; but would it be philosophical to refuse all belief in the agency and power of electricity before the experience of that shock? You take your child to a galvanic apparatus, and show him the same powerful agent burning diamonds, rocks, metals; can the child understand it? How does he know that it is not all a deception? Shall he wait till he can prove it himself?

Do you ever dream of its being unphilosophical to train up your child in a belief of mysteries in nature, which he cannot understand—which he cannot yet for himself demonstrate? Do you think it philosophy to keep your child in ignorance or in doubt, or to teach it to keep its faculties of opinion and belief inactive in regard to those particulars, until it can judge solely for itself? Nothing, you will say, is a greater absurdity. Apply then the same reasoning to the Word of God.

“Have you children,” asks Mr. Coleridge, “or have you lived among children, and do you not know that in all things, in food, in medicine, in all their doings and abstainings, they must believe in order to acquire a reason for their belief? But so it is with religious truths for all men. These we must all learn as children. The ground of the prevailing error on this point is the ignorance that in spiritual concerns to believe and to understand are not diverse things, but the same thing in different periods of its growth. Belief is the seed received into the will, of which the understanding or knowledge is the flower, and the thing believed is the fruit.”

There must be a prejudice in favor of God; the fact that we are created beings makes this not only in a moral point of view obligatory, but also, in an intellectual point of view, necessary and inevitable; there must then, of course, be an atmosphere of belief, without which the proofs themselves would be useless. Is it necessary, in order to an impartial judgment, that this atmosphere be taken away from the soul, or that we be taken out of it? Would you require, in order to an impartial criticism on the Parthenon or the Temple of Theseus, that the radiant atmosphere of Greece should be destroyed, and the fogs of England be made to occupy its place; that the Parthenon should never be seen against the opal-colored morning on Hymettus, or the Temple of Theseus in the rosy light of an Athenian sunset? This prejudice in favor of heavenly things, this rosy light of a prescriptive belief in our souls, must it first be de-

stroyed before we can look at the objects of faith correctly ? Where the affections are right, faith is simply the intuition of proof seen in this atmosphere.

It were quite as philosophical to call for historical proof of the Sun's creation, before believing in the light of the sun, as it is to demand historical proof of the Word of God, before believing in the light of that Word. Do you ask why ? Because, the Word of God shines by an intrinsic, self-evidencing power, to an inward sense, just as the sun shines by a self-evidencing power to an outward sense. But an objector may say, suppose a man hands to me the book of Mormon, affirming that to be the Word of God ; would not the same rule bind me to believe that ? We answer not at all ; it would bind you *not* to believe it ; for the self-evidence in that case is the self-evidence of a lie, the intrinsic color of falsehood. But, if there should come to you another book, with the same self-evidencing power of *divine truth* that you have in the Word of God, you may and must receive it as his Word ; for nothing will have that evidence *but* his Word. And just so, if another sun should be lighted up in God's firmament, you must receive that as God's sun, and not as a mock luminary, the work of a deceiver. Because, nothing but a revelation from God ever will or ever can have the intrinsic power of evidence and authority that the Word of God has. Everything else will speak as the scribes, and having the stamp and authority of the scribes merely, you are not bound to believe it.

You can bring as many and as strong arguments against the light of the sun, as you can against the divine light of the Scriptures. In one view, both are to be proved by the senses ; in another view, the Bible has a proof beyond and above the senses, which the sun has not. It is my senses, which bring to me the historical proof of the Scriptures. That proof demands my belief on external testimony. But this alone could never convince me ; this is not all my proof for the Word of God, but the least part of it ; it is

merely an adjunct; it is not even necessary. In the Word of God itself I have an independent ground of conviction, and a temple of faith by the Spirit of God in my soul, of which my senses indeed, in the conveyance of paper, ink, and printer's types, bring in the materials, and build up the scaffolding, but which arises in my soul entirely distinct and apart from sense and historical testimony. The historical scaffolding may be taken down, and the way in which the stones of the temple in my soul came into their place may have passed from human knowledge, but the temple stands as firm and real, notwithstanding. The way in which the key-stone was put in may have perished, but the arch is not on that account the less strong, upspringing, and expanding.

On the other hand, it is my senses that bring to me *all* the proof of the sun's existence; for there is no sun within me as a counterpart, no reality in my soul to answer to the archetype without. I have therefore more and higher proof of God's Word, and that it is his Word, than I have of the sun. The sun may be a deception, or a creation of my own sense merely, or if not, it may be the work of a great demon. But this Word is not my creation, and it could not be the work of an enemy, and it surpasses the power of my race.

But there is a higher evidence still. What evidence have you that I am speaking? You hear my voice, you see my person. Do you need other demonstration? No, you will say; but so soon as I cease to speak, what evidence can you give to another that I have been speaking? None but that of testimony. If you had my words to show to another, this would be no evidence beyond your own testimony that I had been speaking, that I uttered those words. It would still be your own mere testimony. This is the very ground, so low, so untenable, on which the argument for the Word of God is rested by many minds. But, one thing is omitted. GOD IS STILL SPEAKING. What

evidence had the inspired writers that God was speaking? They heard his voice, they saw his glory, they felt his presence. They heard sometimes audibly, sometimes inwardly, sometimes with what are called miraculous demonstrations, sometimes without. But if God ceased to speak, what evidence could those who thus heard him give to another that he had been speaking? We answer, if God ceased to speak, none but that of testimony, mere human testimony. Even if they had God's words to show, still there would be no evidence beyond their own testimony, that God had spoken them. It would be mere human testimony. They to whom that word was spoken by God, they for whom it was intended, would feel its evidence, and would be compelled to acknowledge it as from God; but others, to whom it was merely shown by those to whom it came, would *not* feel its evidence, would not be compelled to acknowledge it as from God. To all for whom the Word of God was intended, the Word of God speaks, God himself speaks; and if they do not recognize the divine voice, it is because of moral evil in themselves; it is because they are goats or wolves, and not sheep. But even in them the conscience may respond to the divine voice, though the heart may refuse to recognize it.

The point then is this: If God does not still speak, there is no suitable evidence that he has spoken. He must speak to you and to me, as well as to the prophets and apostles, or it is mere human testimony. He *does* thus speak; and now if you ask, What evidence have you that God is speaking? the answer is, *We* hear his voice, *we* feel his presence, *we* know his Spirit. This is the point. *My sheep hear my voice.* The Word of God is never without the Spirit of God, and never ceases to sound. It speaks as audibly now, and as directly to you and to me, as to the prophets. This is the meaning of that declaration, *the Word of God liveth and abideth forever.* It is a continuous, imperishable, personal utterance, not dependent for its au-

thenticity upon human witnesses, but making itself felt in the soul, having its witnesses there. It had its witnesses in the soul in the case of the prophets ; if it had not had them, all miracles would have been of no avail, would have produced no conviction. And just so now, if there be not these witnesses within, all external testimony will be of no avail, not even miracles now enacted. The word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.

What then is the only admissible and irresistible witness to the Word of God ? It is THE WITNESS OF HIS SPIRIT. And therefore Archbishop Usher, at the close of his very powerful array of the reasons, which prove that God is the author of the Holy Scriptures, puts the question, Are these motives of themselves sufficient to work saving faith, and persuade us fully to rest in God's word ? and answers, No. " Besides all these it is required that we have the Spirit of God, as well to open our eyes to see the light, as to seal up fully unto our hearts that truth, which we see with our eyes. For the same Holy Spirit, that inspired the Scriptures, inclineth the hearts of God's children to believe what is revealed in them, and inwardly assureth them above all reasons and arguments, that these are the Scriptures of God. Therefore the Lord, by the prophet Isaiah, promiseth to join his Spirit with his Word, and that it shall remain with his children forever. And so in other promises. This testimony of God's Spirit in the hearts of his faithful, as it is peculiar to the Word of God, so it is greater than any human persuasions grounded upon reason or witnesses of men ; *unto which it is unmeet that the Word of God should be subject, as papists hold when they teach that the Scriptures receive their authority from the church. For by thus hanging the credit and authority of the Scriptures on the church's sentence, they make the church's word of greater credit than the Word of God.* Whereas the Scriptures of God cannot be judged or sentenced by any ; and

God only is a worthy witness of himself, in his Word and by his Spirit, which give mutual testimony one of the other, and work that assurance of faith in his children, that no human demonstrations can make, nor any persuasions or enforcements of the world can remove."

This is a noble passage ; nor have we ever seen the reasons of Faith in the Scriptures as the Word of God more powerfully set forth, and set far above all historical provers and church-dependants on the one side, and all transcendental independents on the other, than in the vigorous and Christian logic of Usher and Halyburton.

Then, perhaps you will ask, is external testimony of no avail ? We answer, Much every way. And the power of a prescriptive belief in the Word of God will be growing stronger and stronger with the increase of this testimony, in the increase of the multitudes, who are brought to the experience of the power of God's Word, and to the exercise of this higher, appropriating personal faith. And herein is the power, the spirituality, the efficacy of different churches tested, just in proportion to the simplicity and purity of their reliance on the Word of God, their profound unshaken conviction and belief of its infallible inspiration, and their acting accordingly. If any church dares give to its own word and ordinances an infallibility which it denies to the Word of God, it must inevitably become weak, corrupt, ambitious. If any church thus dares come between the Word of God and the soul, it is the betrayer, instead of the keeper of its trust, it injures instead of helps the believer ; it is as a dreaming mother, who overlays and suffocates her own children. But just in proportion to the simple, unadulterated, untraditionary faith, with which any church receives and lives upon God's Word, will be the increase, by the instrumentality of that church, of the power of external testimony to the world ; for multitudes of men will be converted—converted not to the church, but to God ;

and every new convert by God's Word is a new witness of the divinity of that Word.

The testimony of the church of God concerning the Word of God, and not concerning herself, is great, is mighty. It is the testimony of the Word and Spirit of God, in and through the church, by its participation in the divine nature, its manifestation of the divine holiness. But then, if it were all annihilated, the Word of God, in its simple majesty, would have just as much power to all to whom it speaks, falling like a cataract into the depths of the soul. A man who has never heard of the cataract of Niagara, would be just as much overwhelmed by it, if he came upon it in the wilderness, as if he had heard the voice of nations testifying to its sublimity. Just so it is with the Scriptures. Their external testimony, as Mr. Berridge used to say of learning, is a good stone to throw at a dog to stop his barking. It is good to meet the objections of infidels, good to show that no counterproof can be brought against your argument ; good also for the mind to fall back upon in times when the spiritual vision is dark, the soul clouded, and only the earthly understanding wakeful. But after all if the Word of God is living, abiding, speaking, whenever and however it comes, it comes with DIVINE AUTHORITY, and needs no attendant to usher it in, no herald to demonstrate its dignity.

This view of the self-evidence and divine authority of the Scriptures, so fundamental in a true philosophy, and yet such a stranger to philosophy in general, is that, to which Dr. Marsh's philosophical investigations would directly lead ; that in which he himself, we believe, as a Christian Philosopher, delighted. He insisted much on the necessity of studying the Word of God with an humble and believing spirit. And for the right interpretation of Scripture, he insisted not merely on the guidance of correct critical rules, but on the light shed by the experience,

within our own souls, through the indwelling Holy Spirit, of what God has revealed in his Word ; there being “ no light which can guide us to a right and full understanding of the Scriptures, except that which first shines in our own heart.” “ Wherever,” says he, “ the subject treated of is of a spiritual nature, we must have in addition to all these outward helps, the exercise and development of the corresponding spiritual acts and affections in our own consciousness. How is it possible, otherwise, for us to understand the words, or to refer them to the things designated ? We may have a notion of their effects and relations ; but the words, in this case, mean more than these ; and more must be known, before the meaning of the writer can be fully apprehended. We must sit at the feet of our Divine Master, and learn of him, and obey his commands, before we can know of his doctrine, before we can fully understand or believe in the name of Jesus.”

The faith of which I have spoken is, it will be seen, very different from a mere belief in the truth ; it is belief in God, the resting of the soul on that affirmation, Thus saith the Lord. This separates it from that belief in Christianity, of which some men and sects make so great a parade under the profession of a pure and lofty regard for truth. They say, we receive the Word of God, because it is true ; on this assumption, they take whatever they choose in and from it, which suits their views of truth ; on this assumption also they say they will receive the Word of God, *so far* as it is true. They acknowledge the “ divine origin of the religion of Christ, and its adaptation to be the faith of the world, when presented in a form corresponding with its inherent spirit, and with the scientific culture of the present age.” They say that “ while other teachers have committed their wisdom to writing, Jesus Christ confided in the divine energy of his doctrine, lest, being entrusted to words, which are but breath, it should be dispersed and lost.”

These men talk of a divine inspiration, but will not receive it anywhere in set words. For them there is no word of God; It is too narrow a confinement of their soaring faith to tie it to a form of words, to restrict it to a volume; as if, forsooth, that which is but the temporary record of one mode of divine inspiration, should bind heart and soul to its dictates. They believe in the truth, and not in such an inspiration. Their search for truth seems to them much more grand and lofty than any mere searching for the truth as it is in Jesus.

But this is not God's view; this is not Christian philosophy. It was never the direction of our blessed Lord himself in matters of religion to search the truth, but to search the Scriptures. There is much pretended philosophical seeking for the truth, combined with a denial of the Scriptures; just as there is much pretended seeking for life, combined with unbelief in, and a denial of, Him, who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. God has given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son, and in his Word as it reveals his Son. God has given to us eternal truth, and this truth is in his Son, and in his Word as it reveals his Son. The whole mass of general believers, but particular infidels, receive the first part of both these propositions, but reject the last. Philosophy, in their view, is larger than faith, and cannot, like faith, be confined to a record.

This I apprehend to be one of the characteristics of that spurious philosophy, which, by a strange misnomer, has so appropriated the term transcendentalism to itself, that it is now almost a hopeless task to recall this abused name to its real meaning. It has had a philosophical meaning, accurate, important, and not invidious. This meaning is admirably conveyed in the following passage from Mr. Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*: "There is a philosophic (and inasmuch as it is actualized by an effect of freedom an artificial) consciousness, which lies beneath, or as it were behind the spontaneous consciousness natural to all reflecting beings.

As the elder Romans distinguished their northern provinces into Cis-alpine and Trans-alpine, so may we divide all the objects of human knowledge into those on this side, and those on the other side of the spontaneous consciousness; *citra et trans conscientiam communem*. The latter is exclusively the domain of pure philosophy, which is therefore properly entitled *transcendental*, in order to discriminate it at once both from mere reflection and representation on the one hand, and on the other from those flights of lawless speculation, which, abandoned by all distinct consciousness, because transgressing the bounds and purposes of our intellectual faculties, are justly condemned as *transcendent*."

Now the term *transcendental*, the old philosophical term, has been stolen from this, its proper acceptance, and applied to those flights of lawless speculation, thus severely characterized by Mr. Coleridge. Transcendentalism, then, has come to mean, if defined by the system of many who assume it, that which *transcends* and casts off the letter and the word, as that which killeth, and rises into the spirit alone, as that which maketh alive. This philosophic unbelief dwells much, of late days, on the internal evidences of Christianity; but it is the evidence of general truths taken from the Scriptures, while the Scriptures themselves are cast aside as not necessarily a part of Christianity, not an essential and inseparable embodiment of it, without which it would cease soon to have an existence. Here this transcendentalism is that which, having received the inflation of those sublime ideas entrusted by the Saviour to their own energy, transcends or rises superior to the temporary record of them. As a butterfly soars from its chrysalis, or as a balloon, cut loose from the point at which it was inflated, wings its independent way through space, so the soul of the transcendentalist, having breathed the breath of life, soars into the pure empyrean, where truth is not confined to particular demonstration, and where Christianity is too large and magnificent to need an appeal to the records of

the Old and New Testaments. This would be like a butterfly returning into its chrysalis. Now the consequence of such a career is inevitable. This departure from divine truth leaves both the soul and its literature, the transcendentalist and his forth-puttings, first to a magnificent but superficial religious sentimentalism, and next to open Deism or concealed Pantheism, with a stale, sickening redecoction of the originalities of the strong-minded infidelity of a former age.

The denial of the Scriptures as the word of God, by which we mean the denial of their infallible inspiration, leads to two opposite extremes ; infidelity on the one side, and a bondage to the church on the other. If it be not to us as individuals that the Scriptures speak, and with all the self-evidence which they need, then an infallible church is the necessary result, in order to secure the true interpretation of the Scriptures, and to supply their lack of authority. The only protection alike from the license of infidelity on the one side, and the despotism of ecclesiastical bigotry on the other, is to be found in the reception of the Word of God as his Word and not man's, as his Word speaking to each individual soul, and by each individual soul to be received, obeyed, and lived upon. This is true independence, righteousness and power ; this the stability of a good education ; this shall be the glory of this Northern University, consecrated as one of the dwelling-places of God's holy light and truth. "May those who teach," said Dr. Marsh, "and those who learn, in this institution, receive with meekness the ingrafted word, and be all taught of God."

The license of infidelity without the Word, many take the profession of a faith and a religion, higher, holier, freer, than can possibly be founded on a form of words ; and even Pantheism itself may be represented as the sublime yearnings of the soul, rising above its personal self, to be absorbed and lost in God, the universal all in all

This mere intellectual sublimated sentimentalism is but an Indian Oriental Mysticism, reproduced under the light of Christianity. At an earlier period its admirers would have been the Gnostics, as they are now the transcendentalists of Christian society. Doubtless there is this natural intellectual yearning after God, even when the heart is at enmity against him. Expressed in the contemplations of any man of high intellect, it will often look like the unutterable, illimitable yearnings of a deep, mystic, holy piety. There is such a reflection of God in the soul. But it is without life, or if life circulates in it, being only the life of nature, it disturbs it. It is like the reflection of the sky and the trees in a quiet lake. Let it rest in perfect stillness, and you would think that heaven itself were there. But let the wind sweep over it, or a storm agitate it,

Or if a stone the smooth expanse divide,
Swift ruffling circles curl on every side.

So let the winds of passion rise, and this intellectual reflection of the image of God and divine things is dispersed and broken in ten thousand fragments.

The calmness and beauty of this intellectual abstraction are often taken for religion itself, so that Spinoza has been regarded as one of the most pious of mankind. His writings have been likened to those of Thomas a Kempis! He was not, perhaps, so justly to be called an Atheist, as an *Aktismatist*, or an *Aktisist*; for he denied a creature rather than a God; "but his scheme," said John Howe, in his *Living Temple*, "though he and his followers would cheat the world with names, and with a specious show of piety, is as directly levelled against all religion, as any the most avowed Atheism; for as to religion, it is all one whether we make nothing to be God, or everything; whether we allow of no God to worship, or leave none to worship him." In this transcendental scheme there are no two

things more similar than Pantheism and Piety : absorption in God, self-renunciation, self-annihilation, union with the Infinite, and other things talked of, being marvellously similar to the self-denial and self-crucifixion for Christ's sake, recommended in the Scriptures. "The scheme of Spinoza," said Howe, "though with great pretence of devotion it acknowledges a Deity, yet so confounds this his fictitious Deity with every substantial being in the world besides, that upon the whole it appears altogether inconsistent with any rational exercise or sentiment of religion at all." Just so, this transcendental devotion, which absorbs us in the universe, and makes religion to consist in the rapt adoration of the God of Pantheism, is quite inconsistent with a personal discipline of the affections in the worship of a personal God under guidance of the Scriptures. To lay one's being at the foot of the cross, to mortify and subject the self-will to God in Christ, is widely different from this vague, mystical absorption of the being in an ideal God, in a universal influence. And so the search for truth, and the love of it, under the forms laid down in the Scriptures, are very different from the philosophical search, like the Greeks, for wisdom ; a passion, in which there is at least as much pride as disinterestedness. In fine, in the words of the holy Archbishop Leighton, "If any pretend that they have the Spirit, and so turn away from the strait rule of the Holy Scriptures, they have a spirit indeed, but it is a fanatical spirit, a spirit of delusion and giddiness : but the Spirit of God, that leads his children in the way of truth, and is for that purpose sent them from heaven to guide them thither, squares their thoughts and ways to that rule whereof it is the author, and that Word, which was inspired by it, and sanctifies them to obedience."

VI. A Christian Philosopher has much to do with Christian Theology ; but it is as a learner rather than a critic ;

for without doubt philosophy should always stand and serve, as a modest handmaid to Theology, and not as a superior judge. By Christian Theology we mean what Zuingle has called "God's thoughts in his own Word;" and in a system of Theology it will be characteristic of the Christian Philosopher to fix his starting point, and his last tribunal, in the Scriptures, and to bring his investigations thither for the determination of their truth. If change and accommodation must be made, it is his business rather to accommodate his views to the Bible, than the Bible to his views. Deplorable have been the results of using a philosophy, or a theological system framed for it, as the veil, medium, or atmosphere of divine truth. "Philosophy and theology," said Zuingle, "were constantly raising difficulties in my mind. At length I was brought to say, We must leave these things, and endeavor to enter into God's thoughts in his own Word."

But what can the philosophy and theology be made of, which are constantly raising difficulties, instead of revealing truth? Human speculations, prejudices, and fancies of opinion;—these, marched before the Bible as its vanguard, instead of being in their place, as the rabble of camp-followers, have done immeasurable mischief. Divine truth, behind such a medium, is as the sun in an eclipse, creating a dim disastrous twilight. Many a mind, before it found rest in God's Work, has had to run the gauntlet, a long and perilous way, through the false philosophy in which it had been educated. Need I mention the Sensuous system, against which, with its dreadful irons for the mind, and its rigid necessitarian frame-work for theology, Dr. Marsh was, in this country, one of the earliest, firmest, profoundest opposers?

"Common sense would teach us," says he, in speaking of a system of education to be founded on God's Word, "that we cannot with propriety combine, in one system of instruction, the truths and principles of the Divine

Word, and other principles and influences of contrary tendency. Our powers of intelligence are not only without contradiction in their relation to each other, but they instinctively tend, under the control of reason, to systematize and reduce to consistent and harmonious principles, the whole complex body of our knowledge. Do not the interests of education, as well as those of religion, require that we teach nothing incompatible with those great truths and principles of the Divine Word, which are themselves fitted to seize with such power upon the mind. Especially should all appearance of contradiction be avoided here, in that stage of an education, when the mind is becoming more distinctly conscious of its own energies, and of the grounds of truth in its own being."

If a man's philosophical system be such an one as destroys the possibility of human freedom, and if he forms his theology into a system under its influence, this is not to act the part of a Christian Philosopher. If a man's philosophical system be one that rejects the atonement, and in the light of that system he comes to the Bible, seeking singly to warp its passages to his negative side, and to turn its strong affirmations into a tissue of lying metaphors, he can in no sense be called a Christian Philosopher. And if his philosophical system be one that admits the atonement, but seeks philosophically to account for it, and in so doing takes only its subjective aspect in relation to ourselves, disposing of all passages, whether in reference to God or man, in that relation only, this, too, is not the course of a Christian Philosopher. In this view, the system of Mr. Coleridge, if system it can be called, to which that great and learned man never gave form and unity, lies open to severe remark, in reference to all that he has said on the doctrine of atonement. On this subject he seems to have deserted his wonted candor, and to have become a special pleader. Disposing of almost the entire language of the scriptures on this subject as metaphorical, he has, in effect,

resolved the atonement into a mere business of regeneration—a mere arrangement of means and ends for our personal sanctification. We may, with great probability, suppose that this was the result of Mr. Coleridge's early religious errors; one consequence of the cold and deadly baptism of his soul in the Unitarian scheme, though he afterwards shuddered at its recollection, was an inability or unwillingness to contemplate the higher ends of the atonement, and its higher nature, as revealed in the Scriptures. It is a great and most unphilosophical confusion, to mingle and interchange what Christ is in and of himself as the regeneration and life of our souls, with the great doctrine of the atonement revealing him, IN HIS DEATH, as the sacrifice for our sins; what Christ is when formed in us the hope of glory, the inward fountain of salvation, and what his atoning sacrifice is in providing for the world the possibility of such regeneration;—confounding, in fine, the regenerating work of the Spirit with the sacrificial work of the Redeemer.

A mind so clear, profound and evangelical as Dr. Marsh's could never have been satisfied with such confusion. This is as unphilosophical as if, in explaining the solar system, an astronomer should confound the influence of light, by which our earth becomes the green and beautiful abode of man, with the power of gravitation, by which it is held in the solar system. Both these things, indeed, may come from the sun, but the power of gravitation is one thing, the power of the sun's light another. And so in the system of Redemption—the atoning sacrifice of Christ is one thing, the regenerating influences of the Spirit are another. And as in the solar system, it may be said that the power of gravitation is what holds the earth in its orbit, so that the sun's light may clothe it in beauty, so, in the system of Redemption, the sacrifice of Christ is what holds man in his orbit, in such a way that the light of the cross and the influences of the Spirit may clothe the soul in the beauty

and life of righteousness. For, without the shedding of blood, there is no remission; and it is a dying Christ that must render possible with God the world's reconciliation, before a living Christ can be the world's regeneration. It is a dying Christ that must hold the world in its orbit of probation and pardon, that it may not sweep madly into the gulf of retribution, before a living Christ can be formed in the soul the hope of glory. Wherefore, the names written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, are written in it as the book of the slain Lamb. It is *the blood of Jesus Christ* that cleanseth us from all sin; and to lose sight of this fact, or to say that in reference to God and the divine attributes, we know little or nothing about it, is to lose sight of the great grandeur of the atonement; of the cross as the central point of glory in the universe; of its omnipotence as a disciplinary system, taking the place of law; of its power in magnifying the law, and confirming and sustaining its sanctions; of its wisdom and efficacy in revealing the enormity of sin; of the energy with which it speaks to the conscience, convincing of guilt in the very work undertaken for guilt's removal; of its definiteness, and might, and concentrating glory in its display of the divine attributes; and, in fine, of its whole ulterior influences on the universe, and in the government of God.

Even in regard to ourselves subjectively, the atonement can be perfectly understood in its influence upon us, only when we take into view its display of the divine character, and the manner in which the light of the divine attributes comes through its instrumentality into the soul. Our need of Christ is not the whole even of the subjective aspect, inasmuch as the sight of ourselves in the light of Christ's passion, constitutes a great part of it, revealing the divine holiness and our guilt. In fine, Mr. Coleridge's view of the atonement excludes all notice of some of the grandest, clearest, brightest, far-reaching passages in the Holy Scriptures; the passages in the 3d of Romans and 1st Colos-

sians included, in which, if language means anything, it means that it is not the redemption *in us* through which we are justified, but the grace of God through the Redemption that is in Christ Jesus: a redemption also, which we have in him through his blood; the forgiveness of sins, on the ground of that declaration or manifestation of the divine righteousness, which has made the justification of the believer possible. "Whom God hath set forth, a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins, through the forbearance of God, that he might be just and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus."

There seems to be in the human mind as real a demand objectively for such an atonement, in regard to the display and justification of God's attributes, as there is subjectively for a personal Christ as the life of God in the soul of man. It might have been wished that Dr. Marsh, along with his rich, valuable, masterly treatise on man's need of a Saviour, an essay as precious in its spiritual influence as it is philosophically profound in its view of our fallen nature, had combined, as its counterpart, a treatise on the necessity for the same Saviour on the part of the divine attributes. No higher service could have been rendered to the church than such a treatise by such a mind would have constituted. Perhaps, had he lived a little longer, this would have been one labor, to which his great and noble powers, his impartial judgment, and his sincere, prayerful, and earnest spirit of inquiry would have been dedicated.

There is an inner circle of qualities and attainments in Dr. Marsh's character and habitudes, as a Christian and a scholar, which I have not noted, and upon which it would not be possible, within this brief space, to dwell. Some little idea of his acquisitions may be gathered from the perusal of the admirably edited volume of his Remains; and in that volume, those who did not know him before, will feel that they know him now; and that our country,

as well as this University, has sustained a loss in his departure, not easily, nor in a moment, made up. We indulge the hope, that under his own tuition there may have been scholars now in training, whose well-developed minds and hearts will ere long do something to supply his influence, and fill his place ; living stones, chosen by the Great Head of the Church, and now in the process of cutting and polishing, that they also may shine gloriously in his Living Temple.

The volume of Dr. Marsh's remains will be found to contain the elements of a philosophy, which even those who are not prepared to receive it in its details in regard to the Will, or the distinction between the Reason and the Understanding, must rejoice to behold among us in a native original form, that it may become the subject of study, investigation and proof ; for it introduces the mind to so much wider a sphere of discipline and knowledge than that which has been customary, it defines so clearly the objects and the sphere of science, and demands so absolutely the union of the natural sciences with the science of our own being, adopting the dynamic theory, defining the spheres of physiology and psychology, and in such wise linking the philosophy of nature with that which is above nature, and that which is above nature directly with God, that if it once become the habit of our students, our students themselves will be different beings ; with a nobleness of mind, a range and depth of knowledge, and a comprehensiveness, clearness, and accuracy of view, such as has been by no means common. Indeed, we are persuaded that this philosophy will be as a new and better invigorating atmosphere for the mind and heart, so that the intellectual growth which rises in it will be nobler, more original, more worthy of the alimment, both of natural and supernatural truth, than any that in our country has yet come into being.

This we say with the more confidence, because Dr. Marsh's opinions were neither hastily adopted, nor hastily

expressed. They were neither indefinite nor mystical in his own mind, and such was the law of his own mental constitution, that he could not express them indefinitely to others. I know not where in our literature you can find more clearness, simplicity and accuracy in the conveyance of philosophical thoughts. He did not merely theorize, but sought to express realities. His views of man's nature as a spiritual being, of his destiny, and of the education appropriate and necessary to the development of that being, were not matters of mere speculation. They made in him a fountain of important, solemn, elevated, *practical* thought. The correlative adaptations of the soul to truth, and of divine truth to the soul, were never more affectingly displayed. His views were deeply interesting of the adaptation of man's outward temple and circumstances to the development of his inward being ; and of the manner in which God educates our affections, that they may be the medium of intercourse with him ; giving us correlative objects for the affections of our temporal being, and as full a supply in Christ for our spiritual and eternal being. He has spoken nobly of the eternal distinction between self-interest and duty, as the ground of action. On the subject of original sin, he has presented a most powerful and simple view of our alienation from God, and of the nature of sin in our being. He has laid down a principle of the utmost importance in all philosophical discussions, that "no merely speculative conclusions can supersede the immediate convictions of practical truth in our moral being."

He had large and comprehensive views of the system of nature, of organic life, of the connection between different created natures, of the laws of organization and development ; and had reflected profoundly on the principle or idea that must govern the form. But all these investigations he pursued in a higher light than any philosopher ever did or could, without standing in the sun, as his soul did, in the centre of the system of Christianity. "See how near,"

says he, "according to the above way of looking at the objects of knowledge, everything in nature is placed to its spiritual ground, and how the higher spiritual consciousness in man finds itself in immediate intercourse with the spiritual world; rather in the immediate presence of God." His philosophy was imbued with his Christianity, and he delighted to prosecute its study under the full influence of Christian light and feeling, tracing every good thing to God.

In his philosophical studies he was a great lover of Mr. Coleridge's profound, beautiful, and suggestive trains of thought and illustration. With the best of the German philosophers he was also intimate; but whatsoever he received from any foreign source became his own, became in himself original, being the nourishment of a mind that must produce fruit from its own profoundness, and richness of life and activity. If Mr. Coleridge had possessed Dr. Marsh's practical, industrious, methodical habits, or if Dr. Marsh had been permitted to enjoy life, as a working period, to the more advanced age at which Mr. Coleridge was called away; in either case, the world would no longer have had to lament the want of a grand and noble scheme of Christian Philosophy consummated. And if now I were to undertake to point out the line of Dr. Marsh's investigations more definitely, I should commence with the following very grand passage from one of Mr. Coleridge's somewhat desultory, but always profound and interesting chapters; and with this quotation I shall leave the subject of Dr. Marsh's philosophy.

"The necessary tendency of all natural philosophy is from nature to intelligence; and this, and no other, is the true ground and occasion of the instinctive striving to introduce theory into our views of natural phenomena. The highest perfection of natural philosophy would consist in the perfect spiritualization of all the laws of nature, into laws of intuition and intellect. The phenomena, (the ma-

terial,) must wholly disappear, and the laws alone (the formal,) must remain. Thence it comes that in nature itself, the more the principle of law breaks forth, the more does the *husk* drop off, the phenomena themselves become more spiritual, and at length cease altogether in our consciousness. The optical phenomena are but a geometry, the lines of which are drawn by light, and the materiality of this light itself has already become matter of doubt. In the appearances of magnetism all trace of matter is lost, and of the phenomena of gravitation, which not a few among the most illustrious Newtonians have declared no otherwise comprehensible, than as an immediate spiritual influence, there remains nothing but its law, the execution of which on a vast scale is the mechanism of the heavenly motions. The theory of natural philosophy would then be completed; when all nature was demonstrated to be identical in essence with that which, in its highest known power, exists in man as an intelligence, and self-consciousness; when the heavens and the earth shall declare not only the power of their Maker, but the glory and the presence of their God, even as he appeared to the great prophet, during the vision of the mount in the skirts of his Divinity.”*

I have but one word to add in reference to those in our country, who are habitually prejudiced, and not unfrequently on principle, against all metaphysical speculations; and I shall do it in the language of that great writer who has been noticed as Dr. Marsh’s favorite author; premising that the perusal of the volume of Dr. Marsh’s Remains will go far to the removal of such prejudices from every religious mind. The first remark which Mr. Coleridge makes in reference to such a prejudice, is this: that true metaphysics are nothing else but true divinity; and the second is this, that “as long as there are men in the world, to whom the *Γνωθι σεαυτον* is an instinct and a command from their own nature, so long will there be meta-

* Biog. Lit. ch. 12.

physicians, and metaphysical speculations; that false metaphysics can be effectually counteracted by true metaphysics alone; and that if the reasoning be clear, solid and pertinent, the truth deduced can never be the less valuable on account of the depth from which it may have been drawn."

In recounting the many and great excellencies of Dr. Marsh's character, I am reminded of a beautiful passage in Wordsworth's *Essay on Epitaphs*. "What purity and brightness is that virtue clothed in, the image of which must no longer bless our living eyes! The character of a deceased friend or beloved kinsman is not seen, no, nor ought to be seen, otherwise than as a tree through a tender haze, or a luminous mist, that spiritualizes and beautifies it, that takes away indeed, but only to the end that the parts which are not abstracted, may appear more dignified and lovely, may impress and affect the more." In the present case there is no such tender haze needed, though the sympathy of the mind would inevitably produce it, if even an angel had departed; nor, indeed, is anything needed, but the most distinct delineation of the worth of the dead, without borrowing any luminous veil from the affections of the living. Dr. Marsh was a profound, meditative, experimental Christian. We have placed this at the head of all his qualities, though this part of his character was not, indeed, so much a separate thing, as it was the life of all his other excellencies, the atmosphere in which all his other qualities grew. The poet Wither beautifully says of "his remembrance which may live after him,

If, therefore, of my labors, or of me,
Aught shall remain, when I removed shall be,
Let it be that wherein it may be viewed,
My Maker's image was in me renewed."

I am sure such would have been Dr. Marsh's desire; and accordingly no one can peruse the volume of his *Remains*,

a volume destined to live after him, and the simple and beautiful sketch of his life prefixed to it, without great delight to find a spirit of such deep, unaffected, unalloyed piety breathing through it. The wish of the Christian Poet is accomplished in this volume, which contains in its portrait of the author the deep, clear lines of the image of God renewed, and a body of thought that could only have sprung from deep Christian experience.

There were delightful qualities in Dr. Marsh's character, of which I have not spoken, but which all who knew him could appreciate even better than they could understand his profound scholarship, or his true philosophical worth. He had the finest feelings, and an unselfish, unworldly heart; a very rare undeviating singleness of purpose, a simplicity of character like a child's, a genuine humility of mind, and a delightful freedom from all ostentation, all pride, either of talent or acquirement. Indeed this latter trait in him was very remarkable. It was, in part, the cause of that retired calmness, with which, unsolicitous to gain a name, and careless what men might say of him, he proceeded as on the path of duty, in his philosophical investigations. He had much poetical sensibility, and the most affectionate social feelings. He possessed the spirit of true patriotism, and would to God that such exhibitions among us of love to our country, as may be found in his Inaugural Address, were more common among our public and literary men. We want men of principle, men of patriotism, thinking men, and praying men.

I congratulate this Institution that it has possessed so noble a Christian Philosopher and scholar, as one of its presiding spirits; that so noble a contribution has been made to our native, original philosophy and literature in the volume of his Remains; that a personal exemplar of such disinterested views and holy principles has been before the students; that in this volume they have the stamp of the character of so pure and simple-hearted, yet pro-

found and vigorous-minded a seeker after truth. I rejoice in behalf of all our institutions, that there has been such a defender of the necessary agency of religious truth in the cultivation of the mind ; such an asserter of the only foundation of permanence and steadfastness, in the Divine Word, and the religious principle. Our republic is safe, if everywhere the guardians of our youth, the teachers of the minds and hearts of our children, may but be imbued with such views of truth and duty. The Spirit of God attends such views, so inculcated, and we believe ever will ; nor has the importance of such teachings, in every direction, as the Spirit of God can consistently accompany, such as will co-operate and not conflict with his divine influences, ever been sufficiently considered.

The memory of Dr. Marsh's great and profound attainments, his deep piety and learning, his delightful simplicity and purity of soul, would have long remained fresh with those who knew him, even if no fruits of his genius had been left after him. To many who loved him, or who sought his kindness and his guidance, he was so familiar and affectionate a friend, that he left them almost unaware that he was a great man ; so little is genuine simplicity of character understood or valued as an attribute of greatness. Indeed, it is one of those qualities which the great world do not understand at all, and which, I had almost said, men can see only by not looking at it, but by being made partakers of it ; it being indefinable, omnipresent as an atmosphere, and making its impression unconsciously upon the soul. Dr. Marsh's friends *knew* him as the *good* man, and the sense of his goodness became one with, and familiarized the impression of his greatness. They *loved* him as the good man, and he was, indeed, a rare and precious example of the union of the child-like Christian with the profound Philosopher.

His reputation abroad is established by fruits of his labors, that cannot die ; but far better is the fragrant

memory of his goodness at home ; far better the assurance that there where he was best known, he was most appreciated, revered, beloved, lamented. While we remember his wisdom, and dwell upon his lovely and attractive qualities this day, let us beware lest our regret that God has taken him away so early, prevent or diminish our gratitude, that we have been permitted to enjoy his presence, his example, his instructions, so long. And let us remember, that though God may not have moulded us in so peculiar a constitution, of so fine and exquisite materials, as that we might aspire or attain to Dr. Marsh's intellectual greatness, yet by divine grace it is both our privilege and duty to be all possessors of his goodness, in being made partakers of the holiness of God in Christ.

LIFE AND WRITINGS OF JOHN FOSTER.*

GEOLOGISTS tell us, somewhat quaintly, that great and inexhaustible springs are found in connection with what they call faults, that is, breaks in the continuity of the rocks. There must be these breaks in the strata, and if it were not for this benevolent arrangement of Providence, there had been neither running fountains nor rivers, but sluggish stagnant pools. A powerful spring is not to be found but in connection with the existence of a great fault. The despotic crust of the earth must be broken up, before its living fountains of waters can gush in freedom to the surface. There is an instructive analogy in all this.

An Ecclesiastical Despotism would keep the intellectual and moral world without *faults*, that is, without *freedom*: it would circle the globe with the dead, hard, rocky crust and tetter of an enforced religious uniformity; it would have no spontaneous, powerful springs breaking out and running freely to the ocean. But God's benevolent power interposes, and breaks up the despotic continuity, and gives us springs. The strata of establishments being pierced and rent, there are no longer stagnant pools, but deep, living fountains.

The analogy might be extended into something like an argument for the necessity and usefulness of various de-

* The Life and Correspondence of John Foster. Edited by J. E. Ryland. With notices of Mr. Foster as a Preacher and a Companion, by JOHN SHEPARD, author of "Thoughts on Devotion," etc., etc. In two volumes. New York, Wiley & Putnam, 161 Broadway, 1846.—*Biblical Repository*.

nominations in the Church of Christ. These things are not necessarily the result of sectarianism, but of freedom; and God makes use of these *faults*, even if we admitted them to be, not merely in the geological, but moral sense of the term, faults,—for the production of vastly greater good than ever there could have been without them. They are not faults, but blessings; and though men may abuse them, they are the assurance and the safeguard of spiritual freedom.

Of the English minds that have departed from our world within a few years, none have excited a deeper interest, or wielded for a season a loftier power, than John Foster and Robert Hall. They were both triumphant instances of the superiority of intellect, and the homage that will be paid to it, over all circumstance and mere external distinction. One of the most obvious reflections that rises in the mind of a thoughtful observer of the greatness and power of such intellect, after the first analysis and admiration of its elements, may be that it was a possession and result of what is called the *voluntary system*. These men were two of the “Intellectual Incas” of their race. In the two together, there were combined nearly all the grand qualities that ever go to make up minds of the highest order; severity and affluence, keenness and magnificence, simplicity and sublimity of thought; ruggedness, power, and elaborate beauty and exquisiteness of style; precision and splendor of language; condensed energy, fire, and diffusive richness of imagination; originality, independence, and perfect classical elegance; comprehensiveness and accuracy; nobleness of feeling, intense hatred of oppression, Christian humility, childlike simplicity.

And yet there were greater differences between them than there were similarities. In some respects their minds were of quite an opposite mould. Hall’s mind was more mathematical than Foster’s, and he was distinguished for his power of abstract speculation, and his love and habit of

reasoning. The tenor of Foster's mind was less argumentative, but more absolute, more intuitive, more rapidly and thoroughly observant.

The impression of *power* is greater from the mind of Foster than of Hall. On this account, and for its eminently suggestive properties, Foster's general style, both of thinking and writing, is much to be preferred; though Hall's has the most sustained and elaborate beauty. Yet the word elaborate is not strictly applicable to Hall's style, which is the natural action of his mind, the movement, not artificial, nor supported by effort, in which his thoughts arranged themselves with the precision and regularity of a Roman cohort. Hall's was a careful beauty of expression, his carefulness and almost fastidiousness of taste being a second nature to him; Foster's was a careless mixture of ruggedness and beauty, the ruggedness greatly predominating. Hall's style is too constantly, too uniformly regular; it becomes monotonous; it is like riding or walking a vast distance over a level macadamized road; a difficult mountain would be an interval of relief. We feel the need of something to break up the uniformity, and startle the mind and we would like here and there to pass through an untrodden wilderness, or a gloomy forest, or to have some unexpected solemn apparition rise before us. There is more of the romantic in Foster than in Hall, and Foster's style is sometimes thickset with expressions that sparkle with the electric fire of imagination.

Hall's mind, in the comparison of the two, is more like an inland lake, in which you can see, though many fathoms deep, the clear white sand, and the smallest pebbles on the bottom. Foster's is rather like the Black Sea in commotion. Hall gives you more of known truth, with inimitable perspicuity and happiness of arrangement; Foster sets your own mind in *pursuit* of truth, fills you with longings after the unknown, leads you to the brink of frightful precipices. There is something such a difference between

the two, as between Raphael the sociable angel, relating to Adam in his bower, the history of creation, and Michael, ascending with him the mountain, to tell him what shall happen from his fall.

Hall's mind is like a royal garden, with rich fruits, and overhanging trees in vistas; Foster's is a stern, wild, mountainous region, likely to be the haunt of banditti. As a preacher, Hall must have been altogether superior to Foster in the use and application of ordinary important evangelical truth, "for reproof, correction, and instruction in righteousness." But Foster probably sometimes reached a grander style, and threw upon his audience sublimer illustrations and masses of thought. Foster was not successful as a preacher; his training and natural habits were unfortunate for that; and the range of thought, in which his mind spontaneously moved, was too far aloof from men's common uses, abilities of perception, tastes and disposition. But Hall was doubtless one of the greatest preachers that ever lived. Yet there were minds that would prefer Foster, and times at which all the peculiar qualities of his genius would be developed in a grander combination of sublimity and power. As a general thing, Hall must have been more like Paul preaching at Athens in a Roman toga; Foster, like John the Baptist in the wilderness, with a leathern girdle about his loins, eating locusts and wild honey. He speaks of one of his own sermons, which a man would give much to have heard; we can imagine some of its characteristics. It was on the oath of the angel, with one foot upon the sea, and another on the land, swearing that Time should be no longer; and his own mind was in a luminous, winged state of freedom and fire, that seemés to have surprised himself; but no record of the sermon is preserved.

The vigor and uptwisting convolutions of Foster's style are the results simply of the strong workings of the thought, and not of any elaborate artificial formation.

For though he labored upon his sentences, with unexampled interest and care, after his thoughts had run them in their own original mould, they were always the creation of the thought, and not a mould prepared for it. The thought had always the living law of its external form within it. We know of scarce another example in English literature, where so much beauty, precision, and yet genuine and inveterate originality are combined. It is like the hulk of a ship made out of the smoothed knees of knotty oak.

There is a glow of *life* in such a style, and not merely quiet beauty, whether elaborate or natural, that is like the glow in the countenance of a healthy man, after a rapid walk in a clear frosty morning. But it sometimes reminds you of a naked athletic wrestler, struggling to throw his adversary, all the veins and muscles starting out in the effort. Foster's style is like the statue of Laocoon writhing against the serpent: Hall's reminds you more of the Apollo of the Vatican. The difference was the result of the intense effort with which Foster's mind wrought out and condensed, in the same process, its active meditations. Everywhere it gives you the impression of power at work, and his illustrations themselves seem to be hammered on the anvil. It gives you the picture he has drawn of himself, or his biographer for him, in the attitude of what he called *pumping*. At Brearly Hall he used to try and improve himself in composition, by "taking paragraphs from different writers and trying to remodel them, sentence by sentence, into as many forms of expression as he possibly could. His posture on these occasions was to sit with a hand on each knee, and moving his body to and fro, he would remain silent for a considerable time, till his invention in shaping his materials had exhausted itself. This process he used to call *pumping*." Foster's style is the very image of a mind working itself to and fro, with inward intensity.

The characteristics of power and rugged thought in Foster, are admirably set forth in some of his own images. Speaking in his journal of a certain individual's discourse, he says, "he has a clue of thread of gold in his hand, and he unwinds for you ell after ell; *but give me the man who will throw the clue at once, and let me unwind it, and then show in his hand another ready to follow.*"

He speaks of the great deficiency of what may be called *conclusive* writing and speaking. "How seldom we feel at the end of the paragraph or discourse, that something is *settled and done*. It lets our habit of thinking and feeling *just be as it was*. It rather carries on a parallel to the line of the mind, at a peaceful distance, *than fires down a tangent to smite across it.*" Foster always *smote across* the mind.

"Many things," says he, "may descend from the sky of truth, without deeply striking and interesting men; as from the cloudy sky, rain, snow, &c., may descend without exciting ardent attention; it must be large hailstones, the sound of thunder, torrent rain, and the lightning's flash; analogous to these must be the ideas and propositions, which strike men's minds." Foster's own writings are eminently thus exciting. And it may be said of him, as he remarked of Lord Chatham, speaking of the absence of argumentative reasoning in his speeches; "he struck, as by intuition, directly on the *results* of reasoning, as a common shot strikes the mark, without your seeing its course through the air as it moves towards its object." But Foster thought, and reasoned in thinking, most intensely and laboriously; it was not mere intuition that has filled his pages with such condensed results.

Foster and Hall were both men of great independence of mind; but Hall's independence was not combined with so great a degree of originality, and it received more gently into itself in acquiescence the habitudes of society, and the characteristics of other minds. Foster's independence was

that of bare truth; he hated the frippery of circumstance, the throwing of truth upon external support. He would have it go for no more than it was worth. And anything like the *imposition* of an external ceremonial, he could not endure. He went so far as to wish that everything ceremonial and sacerdotal could be cleared out of our religious economy. He wanted nothing at all to come between the soul of man and free unmingled truth. The hearty conviction of truth, and the pure acting from it, was what he required. He abhorred all manner of intolerance with such vehemence and intensity of hatred, that if he could have had a living *Nemesis* for the retribution of crimes not punished by human law, it would have been for that. He hated everything that tempted man to dissemble, to seem or assume what he was not. He hated oppression in every form. He hated a state-established hierarchy, as "infinitely pernicious to Christianity."

We have in these volumes a record of the life and correspondence of this most original and powerful mind; yet it was a mind in some respects strangely constructed, or rather, we should say, strangely self-disciplined, and in some respects out of order for *want* of self-discipline. Looking through the whole seventy years and more of Foster's life, and remembering the magnificent intellectual endowments with which it pleased God to create him, and the almost uninterrupted health and comparative leisure enjoyed for nearly fifty years, there will seem to have been by him but little accomplished, there will seem to have been almost a waste of power. We might, in some respects, compare Foster with Coleridge; in respect of originality and power of intellect, they were very much alike; not so in variety, comprehensiveness, and profoundness of erudition; for while Coleridge's acquisitions were vast and varied, Foster's were much rather limited. But both were blest with transcendent powers of mind and grand opportunities, and yet accomplished comparatively little; and a

severe censor might say, are instances of a lamentable disuse of intellect. Taking Coleridge's miserable health into view, and the fact that he was not, like Foster, at an early period brought under the impulse of true religion, we ought perhaps to say, that of the two, Coleridge accomplished the most. But taking the *character* of Foster's efforts into consideration, their more immediate bearing on men's highest interests must incline us to put the adjudged superiority of amount to his score.

The development of character and opinion in these volumes is intensely interesting and instructive; so is the display and observance of influences and causes forming and directing opinion; so, likewise is the struggle between conscience and habit, between grandeur of impulse and judgment, conflicting with native and habitual indolence and procrastination. There was, in the first place, a strong, peculiar, obstinate, iron mould, which might have made the man, under certain circumstances, as hinted in one of Foster's own Essays, a Minos or a Draco; but which, had it been filled with apostolic zeal in the love of Christ and of souls, would have made almost another apostle. There were tendencies to deep and solemn thought, and to great wrestlings of the intellect and spirit, which, brought under the full influence of the "powers of the world to come," and developed in the intense benevolence of a soul by faith freed from condemnation, and habitually communing with God in Christ, would have given as great a spiritual mastery over *this* world as any human being could well be conceived to exercise. But for this purpose there must have been a holy and deep baptism in the Word of God, an unassailable faith in, and most humble acquiescence with, and submission to, its dictates; a familiarity with it as the daily food of the soul, and experience of it, as of a fire in one's bones, admitting no human speculation to put it out; no theory of mere human opinion, or feelings, or imagination, to veil, or darken or make doubtful its realities.

Now the want of this kind of familiarity with the Scriptures, this profound study and experience of them; this unhesitating reception of them as the infallible Word of God; may have been the secret of some of Foster's greatest difficulties. There was nothing but this fixedness in God's Word, that could be the helm of a mind of such unusual power and original tendencies. Foster wanted an *all-controlling faith*; he wanted submission to the Word of God as the decisive, supreme, last appeal. Foster's character was somewhat like that of Thomas among the Apostles; gloomy tendencies in it, inveterate convolutions of opinion, seclusion in its own depths, and sometimes only faith enough just to save him from despair.

He had a strong self-condemning conscience, a clear, massive view and powerful conception of human depravity, but not an early and accurate view, or powerful sense, of the infinite odiousness of sin, as manifested by the divine law, the divine holiness, and the divine atonement. He had an instinctive, vigorous appreciation of the ignorance, crime, and evil in human society, a sense of its misery, and a disposition to dwell upon its gloomy shades, which made him, as an observer, what Caravaggio or Espagnoletto were as painters; tremendously dark and impressive in his delineations. But it was quite as much the instinct and taste of the painter, as it was the light of the Word of God, revealing the depths of Satan. It was the native intensity of observation, combined with a saturnine turn of mind, and intermingled with revelations of things as they are, beneath the light of the Divine Attributes.

Mr. Foster came early under the power of religious conviction, but evidently not in the happiest manner, and not so as to bring him at once thoroughly, heartily, confidingly, to Christ. Perhaps there may be traced much of what is called *legal* (at least for a long time), mingled with his acceptance of Christ as the only refuge of his soul, or as he would sometimes have denominated it, with his views of

the economy of human redemption. There was more of the general reliance of the mind upon that as an economy, than of the personal reliance of the soul upon Christ as a Saviour. One cannot but be impressed with the fact of the great absence, throughout the whole tenor of his letters, his conversations, and the mould of his life and character till a late period,—the great absence and want of habitual, and even occasional reference to the love of Christ, the claims of the cross, the authority of the Word of God, and all that is peculiar to the gospel. Perhaps there may have been an intentional exclusion of these topics, as trite and technical, induced by an extreme of the same feelings with which he wrote so severely concerning the customary diction of evangelical piety, and which passed unawares into a fastidiousness, and almost aversion in his own mind, which became habitual. His letters to Miss Saunders at the close of these volumes, show how entirely he threw off any such embarrassment, when roused to the work of presenting eternal realities to an immortal spirit on the threshold of eternity. But from an early period, his disgust at the peculiar diction of the gospel, as used by men who seemed to have lost all perception of the sublime ideas intended to be conveyed by it, may have operated insensibly in the way of a prejudice against some of those ideas themselves.

He had indeed a sense of guilt, which became, at a later period, absorbing and powerful; and a sense of the atonement, which grew deeper and deeper to the last, with a most entire reliance upon it; but mingled with this, and influencing his whole habit of thought and feeling, and even of belief, far more than he would himself have been willing to acknowledge, there seems at one time to have been a secret unconscious reliance on the hope that the Supreme Judge would not be so rigidly severe in the scrutiny of mortals, as the terms of the Gospel and the Law imply; so that, instead of relying *solely* on the merits of Christ, as a sinner utterly and forever lost without him, he appeared

to rely on the mercy of God as a lenient, compassionate Judge, in whose sight an amiable and good life might also come between the sinner and the fear of an inexorable judgment. We think this feeling is plainly to be detected in what Foster says of the grounds of his hope in the case of his own son. And though in his own case he was always gloomily and severely self-accusing, yet it seemed much like the same experience in the case of Dr. Johnson, whom Foster not a little resembled in some characteristics ; and, as in the case of Dr. Johnson, Foster's own personal view of Christ, and reliance upon him, and sense of deliverance from condemnation, were always greatly dimmed and diminished by the ever-recurring habit of looking for something in himself, and in his preparation to meet God, as a ground of confidence. A more defective religious experience, for a season, *in so eminent a Christian Minister*, we think is rarely to be found on record. Indeed, compared with men like Newton, Scott, Ryland, Hill, with Mr. Hall, and some others, either but little preceding or quite contemporary with Foster, he appears sometimes almost like a strong-minded, intellectual but half-enlightened Pagan, in the comparison.

This defective early experience, and Foster's strong antipathy to the *technicals* of evangelical piety, especially if approximating in his view in any manner to cant, together with his want of continued, thorough, systematic or scriptural study of theology, acted and reacted on each other. And at one time he was so disastrously under the power of a tendency to rationalism, and to a choice of what to believe irrespective of the Scriptures, that he seems to have come very near to the slough of the Socinian system. He had a strong corrective in the piety and influence of his friend, the Rev. Mr. Hughes, to whose correspondence and conversation he evidently owed much. But he had great repugnance to anything like a "party of systematics," and he carried his natural independence and hatred of restraint

to such a degree, that he would even have dissolved the very institution of churches, with every ordinance in them, and have had nothing on earth but public worship and the Lord's Supper. This peculiarity was akin to his own personal reception of Christianity as a general economy, unaccompanied by a sufficiently close and scriptural study of its elements with a sufficiently entire and sole reliance upon Christ.

But we find ourselves, in our survey of the characteristics of a great and powerful mind, glancing at defective points first, which ought not to be; and we must not proceed, without the outlines of the life and opinions of this remarkable man as presented in his letters and biography. In life and character he was most lovely, and original in his simplicity and loveliness; and this, with his grand superiority of thought and style to almost the whole range of modern English literature, makes his whole genius and moral excellence so striking, that it seems an ungrateful task to dwell even upon speculative defects. In this mine of precious metal, the discovery of a vein of very different and contradictory material compels us to a close examination of it, and of the hidden causes that might have produced it. Many are the laborers that have been working in this mine, and bringing out whole ingots of gold for the manufacture of their own pots and cups, and vessels, who never dreamed, till recently, that there was anything *but* gold in its deep, curious, far-reaching seams of treasure. We shall find that "an enemy hath done this," and that it is one of the most memorable examples of his infernal and partially successful enginery.

Mr. Foster was born in 1770. His father was a substantial farmer and weaver, a strong-minded man and Christian. From early childhood John Foster was reserved and thoughtful, constitutionally pensive, full of emotion and sentiment, but of "an infinite shyness" in the revelation of his feelings. As early as the age of twelve

years he expresses himself as having had "a painful sense of an awkward but entire individuality." He possessed by nature an intensely vivid power of association, combined with great strength and vividness of imagination. He was endowed with an exquisite sensibility to the loveliness and meaning of the world of external scenery. There was indeed in him such a remarkable combination of all the requisites for a great poet, that it seems almost strange that the qualities of his being had not run in that mould. He would have made the most *thoughtful* poet that ever lived.

No man that has ever read it can have forgotten the exquisitely beautiful passage on the influence of nature over the sensibility and imagination, in the Essay on a man's writing memoirs of himself. There are similar passages in Mr. Foster's Review of the Philosophy of Nature. His own mind was developed under the power of deep impulses from the richness, grandeur and beauty of the creation, and there was within him "an internal economy of ideas and sentiments, of a character and a color correspondent to the beauty, vicissitude, and grandeur, which continually press upon the senses." "Sweet Nature!" exclaims he, in one of his letters, "I have conversed with her with inexpressible luxury; I have almost worshipped her. A flower, a tree, a bird, a fly, has been enough to kindle a delightful train of ideas and emotions, and sometimes to elevate the mind to sublime conceptions. When the Autumn stole on, I observed it with the most vigilant attention, and felt a pensive regret to see those forms of beauty, which tell that all the beauty is going soon to depart." For this reason he would sometimes come back from his walks, after witnessing in the fields some of the flowers, with which Nature prophecies the closing season of their loveliness, and say in a tone of sadness, "I have seen a fearful sight to-day; I've seen a buttercup!" Though he took great delight in flowers, he would not often gather them, because he would

not shorten their existence ; he loved to see them live out their little day.

The youth of this being of such exquisite and original genius was spent mainly in weaving. Till his fourteenth year he worked at spinning wool to a thread by the hand-wheel, and for three years afterwards he wove double stuffs and lastings. Strange indeed ! for meanwhile his passion for learning was such, that he would sometimes shut himself up in the barn for hours, and study what books he could get hold of, and then was tied to the loom again. Thus he was self-educated, sparingly, and not very favorably, until his seventeenth year, when he became a member of the Baptist Church, under the pastorship of the venerable Dr. Fawcett, under whose directions he prosecuted his theological studies for a season at Brearly Hall.

In his Essay on a man's writing memoirs of himself, Mr. Foster has remarked, in reference to the effect of much and various reading on the mind in its development, that "it is probable that a very small number of books will have the pre-eminence in our mental history. Perhaps your memory will recur promptly to six or ten that have contributed more to your present habit of feeling and thought than all the rest together. And here it may be observed that when a few books of the same kind have pleased us emphatically, they too often form an almost exclusive taste, which is carried through all future reading, and is pleased only with books of that kind." His own taste in reading carried him much into the region of the romantic, the imaginative and the wonderful in history and character. He loved to read books of travels, and always drew illustrations with great force and beauty, from his excursions through this kind of literature. On a comparison of his correspondence with a volume of his Essays, a most striking resemblance will be found between the habits of mind, the trains of thinking, reading and observation, and the prevailing character of the feelings, developed in the one

and in the other. No man ever drew more from himself, in the composition of a great work, or turned more directly into illustration of his subjects the influences that had formed his own being and opinions, or more truly, though perhaps unintentionally, set down the great features of his own nature, than Mr. Foster in the writing of his Essays. Milton's *Paradise Lost* is not more stamped with the grandeur of his own mind and feelings, and the sublimity of his imagination, than Foster's Essays with his. Indeed the Essays occupy a place in that department of English Literature almost as separate and supreme as the *Paradise Lost* does in the department of its poetry. In power of thought and style they are unrivalled, unequalled.

Young's *Night Thoughts* occupied a conspicuous place among the books which attracted Foster's early notice, and under the influence of which the characteristics of his mind were much formed and developed. The strain of gloomy and profound sublimity in that poem suited perfectly the original bent of his intellect, the character of his imagination, and his tendencies of feeling, so that it wrought upon him with a powerful effect. It even had much to do with the moulding of his style, as well as the sustaining and enriching of his native sublimity of sentiment. Almost all Foster's pages are tinged with the sombre, thoughtful grandeur of the night-watcher; they reflect the lonely magnificence of midnight and the stars. And there are images in Young, which describe the tenor of Foster's meditative life, occupied, so much of it, with intense contemplations on the future life, in pacing to and fro upon the beach of that immortal sea, which brought us hither. For no one ever saw him but he seemed to

"Walk thoughtful on the solemn, silent shore
Of that vast ocean we must sail so soon."

His love and admiration of Young's *Night Thoughts* he carried with him through life. Of Milton he remarked that

“Milton’s genius might harmoniously have mingled with the angels that announced the Messiah to be come, or that on the spot and at the moment of his departure predicted his coming again.” He held in great admiration the powerful mind of Johnson. His Essays, as well as some of his Reviews, are such a proof of the discriminating power, taste, and admirable thought and illustration with which he would pass through the range of English and Classical literature, especially as a Christian critic, that they make one wish that he had given to the world a volume on the principles of criticism.

But it should have been in the shape of original investigations; for Mr. Foster’s Reviews, though full of profound thought and fine illustrations, are not, on the whole, equal to his Essays. He was limited by the stuff. Nothing imposed upon him as a task, by a subject presented from abroad, was equal to what grew out of his own mind. *That* was a region of thought; affluence and originality of thought; but it was spontaneous, and the forms it must take should be so, too, if they would exhibit the whole power and originality of the author. Besides, his subjects were often not congenial, and this was a circumstance which made a great difference in the workings of his genius, and of course in its productions. The mind may have vast original stores and capacities; but every talismanic inscription is not the one that can open or command them. The silk-worm weaves from itself, but it feeds on mulberries; it could not produce silk from rose leaves or the oak. The aliments of genius are almost as important as its elements.

The range of Mr. Foster’s *theological* studies does not seem to have been comprehensive, nor does he seem to have cared to have it such; hating *party* systems to such a degree as to be carried almost into the opposite extreme. Some instructive hints as to unfavorable early associations connecting themselves with the system of Evangelical truth

are to be found in the second and third of his letters on the aversion of men of taste to Evangelical religion, from which one may conjecture similar unfortunate influences to have operated on Mr. Foster's mind early in life. After he had finished his course under Dr. Fawcett at Brearly Hall, he came under the tutorship of Mr. Hughes, the founder and Secretary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, in the Baptist Seminary at Bristol. Mr. Hughes's mental vigor was of "such a nature," to use the expression of Foster himself, "as to communicate a kind of contagion," while his piety was deep and fervent.

Foster early speaks in several of his letters of an "excessive constitutional indolence, which is unwilling to purchase even the highest satisfaction at the price of little mental labor." He sometimes wished himself "engaged in some difficult undertaking, which he must absolutely accomplish, or die in the attempt." It was not an aversion to the labor of hard thinking, but of writing. It cost him severe self-denial and effort to put pen to paper. Dr. Johnson used to say, a man can write at any time, if he will set himself *doggedly* to it. All that a mind like Johnson's or Foster's needed was the first dogged effort, and then the intellectual machinery would move from mere excitement.

Mr. Foster's first regular engagement as a preacher was with a small auditory at Newcastle-on-Tyne. There were some ten or twelve individuals, who listened to his original discourses with breathless interest, but he remained here little more than three months, and in 1793 went to preach to a Baptist society in Dublin. It was an uncongenial situation, and he abandoned it in little more than a year, having found his greatest enjoyment while there in attending to the children of a charity school, to whom he would talk familiarly, and read amusing and instructive books. He made an experiment on a classical and mathematical school in Dublin, and gave it up after eight or nine months.

His opinions on religious subjects were as fluctuating as his employments, and at one time he saw no possibility of coming to any satisfactory conclusions. He would have liked some Arian congregation in want of a preacher, and with as little fixedness of opinion and as much uncertainty as existed in his own mind, to employ him while he was halting. Had he found such a place, we might have had in his life a counterpart to the early history of Coleridge. What would have exactly gratified him, would have been "the power of building a meeting of his own, and without being controlled by any man, and without even the existence of what is called a *church*, of preaching gratis to all that chose to hear." In this state of mind he had "discarded the doctrine of eternal punishments."

Here is something to be marked. We have before us a period of some three or four years, from the age of twenty-two to twenty-six, during which the opinions, the employments, the expectations and intentions of Mr. Foster were utterly unsettled. His course of reading was vague, his course of study was rambling and not disciplinary; it was neither theological nor literary, but embraced projections for both. Sometimes for a year he did not preach at all. Sometimes he taught the classics and mathematics. Sometimes he preached in cleric cloth, sometimes in "tail and colored clothes," sometimes of a Saturday evening perused Dr. Moore's Journal of a residence in France, and "adjusted some of the *exteriors* for the morrow," and on Sabbath morning made his sermon in bed, "caught some considerable ideas," and ascended the pulpit. "I seem nearly at a stand with respect to the adjustment of plans for futurity. Whether I am to be a preacher or not, I cannot tell."—"At some moments of life, the world, mankind, religion, and eternity, appear to me like one vast scene of tremendous confusion, stretching before me far away, and closed in shades of the most awful darkness;—a darkness which only the most powerful splendors of Deity can illu-

mine, and which appears as if they never yet had *illuminated* it."

Now it is during these three or four years, not so much of the transition, as of the chaotic state, in Mr. Foster's life, that we find, amidst all his uncertainties, one sudden and positive declaration, "*I have discarded the doctrine of eternal punishments.*" He adds, "I can avow no opinion on the peculiar points of Calvinism, for I have none, nor see the possibility of forming a satisfactory one." The discarded doctrine seems to have been cashiered by Mr. Foster with about as little thoughtful investigation, as if he had been laying aside an old coat. The sudden announcement of this negative position is almost the only positive thing to be found in these three or four years of his experience. He was some twenty-four years of age. If this was the manner in which he decided upon the fundamental articles of that Christian System which he was preaching, it is manifest that his theological views could have been but little worth. This announcement of opinion has an abruptness, an isolation, a dislocation from every train of association and employment, which intimates a hasty prejudice, rather than a deliberately-formed conviction. He seems to have discarded the clerical dress and the clerical doctrine with about the same independence and indifference; but in neither case as an absolute conviction. If, however, his denial of this grand prominent feature in the Christian system is to be traced back to this period, it is manifestly a denial not based upon any profound or protracted examination of the subject.

Having passed through this period, we find Mr. Foster, in 1797, accepting an invitation to become the minister of a Baptist Church in Chichester. This is one year after the preceding declaration of opinion. After he has been preaching two years at Chichester, we find him saying to his friend Mr. Hughes, that "he holds, he believes, accurately, the leading points of Calvinistic faith; as the corruption

of human nature, the necessity of a divine power to change it, irresistible grace, the influence of the Spirit, the doctrine of the atonement in its most extensive and emphatic sense," &c., &c. "My opinions are, in substance, Calvinistic." It would seem that the moment Mr. Foster began to apply himself in earnestness, and with fixedness of purpose, to the duties of the ministry, his mind began to be settled in the great truths of the gospel. For two years and a half, his biographer tells us, he "applied himself with greater earnestness than at any former period to his ministerial duties, usually preaching three times on the Sunday, and in various ways striving to promote the piety and general improvement of the congregation." The result to himself is full of instruction. No longer left to vague indeterminate musings and readings, the continued effort to teach and improve others wrought a salutary correction and decisiveness in his own convictions.

His intercourse with his former tutor, Mr. Hughes, was of the greatest benefit. The views and facts presented by this gentleman were dwelt upon by Mr. Foster with "great emotion." In a letter to his parents in 1799, he speaks with frankness. "My visit to Mr. Hughes has been of great service in respect of my religious feelings. He has the utmost degree of evangelic animation, and has incessantly, with affectionate earnestness in his letters, and still more in his personal intercourse, acted the monitor on this subject. It has not been in vain. I have felt the commanding force of the duty to examine and judge myself with a solemn faithfulness. In some measure I have done so, and I see that on this great subject I have been wrong. The views which my judgment has admitted in respect to the gospel in general, and Jesus, the great pre-eminent object in it, have not inspired my affections, in that animated, unbounded degree, which would give the energy of enjoyment to my personal religion, and apostolic zeal to my ministrations among mankind. This fact is serious, and moves my

deep regrets. The time is come to take on me with stricter bonds and more affectionate warmth, the divine discipleship. I fervently invoke the influences of Heaven, that the whole spirit of the gospel may take possession of all my soul, and give a new and powerful impulse to my practical exertions in the cause of the Messiah."

"My opinions are more Calvinistic than when I first came here; *so much so as to be in direct hostility with the leading principles of belief in this society.* The greatest part of my views I believe are accurately Calvinistic. My opinion respecting future punishments is an exception."

We shall resume the consideration of this latter point, in a particular examination of the tenor of Mr. Foster's mind and writings with reference to it. It was a most strange, unaccountable, and to many persons a startling announcement, that some of the letters in these volumes proved the author of them to have renounced the Scripture truth of the endless punishment of the wicked. We shall see how the thing lay in his mind; how, while his whole belief and practical course was evangelical, there was on this point a break in the chain; his convictions kept the continuity, while a doubting, inconsistent, and impatient logic denied it. It was like an arch kept in its position and form without the key-stone, by the frame on which it was constructed; that frame being in Foster's mind an uninterrupted spiritual conviction and pressure of personal guilt and of eternal realities. To see him in company with the deniers and scoffers of the eternal sanctions of the Divine law, would be as if Abdiel had been found fighting by mistake in the army of the fallen angels.

We have seen his convictions becoming more and more Calvinistic. An extract from a letter to Rev. Dr. Fawcett, in the year 1800, is here in point; written apparently, in part, with reference to the change of opinion noted in the letter to his parents.

“I receive with pleasure, but not without diffidence of myself, your congratulations on a happy revolution of my views and feelings. Oh, with what profound regret I review a number of inestimable years nearly lost to my own happiness, to social utility, and to the cause and kingdom of Christ! I often feel like one who should suddenly awake to amazement and alarm on the brink of a gloomy gulf. I am scarcely able to retrace exactly through the mingled dreary shades of the past, the train of circumstances and influences which have led me so far astray; but amid solemn reflection, the conviction has flashed upon me irresistibly, that I must be fatally wrong. This mournful truth has indeed many times partially reached me before, but never so decisively, nor to awaken so earnest a desire for the full, genuine spirit of a disciple of Jesus. I see clearly that my strain of thinking and preaching has not been pervaded and animated by the evangelic sentiment, nor consequently accompanied by the power of the gospel, either to myself or to others. I have not come forward in the spirit of Paul, or Peter, or John; have not counted all things but loss, that I might win Christ, and be found in him. It is true, indeed, that this kind of sentiment, when strongly presented, has always appealed powerfully to both my judgment and my heart; I have yielded my whole assent to its truth and excellence, and often longed to feel its heavenly inspiration; but some malady of the soul has still defeated these better emotions, and occasioned a mournful relapse into coldness of feeling, and sceptical or unprofitable speculation. I wonder as I reflect; and am amazed how indifference and darkness could return over a mind, which had seen such gleams of heaven. I hope that mighty grace will henceforward save me from such infelicity. My habitual affections, however, are still much below the pitch that I desire. I wish above all things to have a continual, most solemn impression of the absolute need of the free salvation of Christ for my own soul, and to have

a lively faith in him, accompanied with all the sentiments of patience, humility, and love. I would be transformed, fired with holy zeal; and henceforth live not to myself, but to him that died and rose again. My utmost wish is to be a minor apostle; to be an humble, but active, devoted, heroic servant of Jesus Christ, and in such a character and course to minister to the eternal happiness of those within my sphere. My opinions are in substance decisively Calvinistic. I am firmly convinced, for instance, of the doctrines of original sin, predestination, imputed righteousness, the necessity of the Holy Spirit's operation to convert the mind, final perseverance, &c., &c."

Such letters as these afford convincing proof that the mind of the writer was under the influence of that Divine Grace, of which he asserts the necessity in the soul. They afford proof equally convincing, of the disastrous nature of those tendencies, whatever they may have been, under which Mr. Foster found himself "on the brink of a gloomy gulf;" and which, as we shall see, continued, notwithstanding the endearing openness and meekness with which he received the severe suggestions and remonstrances of inferior minds, to harass and fetter his spirit. The tracing of these causes in their operation, so far as it can be done even with any degree of probability, is a matter of much importance.

Yet it seems, we say again, an ungrateful and presumptuous work to analyze the defects or obliquities in the religious character of a man of sincere piety, and of such vast endowments; though the picture is before the world, and there are reasons for a severe scrutiny of it. It seems still more ungrateful to take the ingenuous confession of Mr. Foster's own mind, which are in themselves such a delightful evidence of genuine childlike humility, in corroboration of a judgment passed upon his deficiencies. But if Mr. Foster had the frankness and humility of a little child, he had also an entire freedom from anything like morbid-

ness of conscience ; if he had a perfect ingenuousness of character, he had also a strong protection, in his hatred of hypocrisy and cant, against overdrawing any of the deficiencies of that character ; he would be likely to set down things just as they are, or at least just as they appeared to him on discovering them. We use the freedom of those, who have followed Foster's intellect as a guiding star ; who well remember the time when, as if some gorgeous angel had come to them to lead them on in paths of truth never before opened, they remained as it were spellbound by the grandeur of the vision. And now, if the same angel beckons them on towards a tract of error, they are right, if they scrutinize most severely the elements of an intellectual and spiritual development, assuming so unexpectedly such a direction ; elements, every one of which they were prepared at one time to take even on trust as well-nigh perfect.

In 1799, Mr. Foster wrote a deeply-interesting letter to his friend Hughes, in acknowledgment of the justness and kindness of a preceding letter, which had been painful to him by the severity of its friendly strictures. "I know it too well," he says, "that for a long course of time, during which I have felt an awful regard for religion, my mind has not been under the full immediate impression of its most interesting character, the most gracious of its influences, its evangelic beams. I have not, with open face, beheld the transforming glory of the Lord. I have, as it were, worshipped in the outer courts of the temple, and not habitually dwelt in that sacred recess, where the God of love reveals all himself in Jesus Christ. And is it difficult to believe that in advancing towards a better state, I may be accompanied awhile by some measure of the defects and the shades contracted in that gloomy sojourn, which I must forever deplore ?"

The state of his mind, while in that gloomy sojourn, may be partially gathered from a letter in 1798. He speaks

of "the whole hemisphere of contemplation as inexpressibly strange and mysterious. It is cloud pursuing cloud, forest after forest, Alps upon Alps. It is in vain to declaim against scepticism; I feel with an emphasis of conviction, wonder and regret, that all things are almost enveloped in shade, that many things are covered with thickest darkness, that the number of things to which certainty belongs is small. I hope to enjoy the sunshine of the other world. One of the very few things that appear to me not doubtful, is the truth of Christianity in general; some of the evidences of which I have lately seen most ably stated by Archdeacon Paley, in his work on the subject."

This is surely a sad state for a preacher of the Gospel. Say what you will of it, it argues a most defective religious experience, the defects and shades of which did indeed accompany Mr. Foster, in some degree, all through life. It could not have been otherwise, without a great and powerful change, and he was not entirely delivered from the malady of which he speaks in those letters. His mind was veiled; the shades remained upon it.

But if Mr. Foster had passed effectually and thoroughly *through* such a state of mind as this, and had come out from it, by the grace of God, in reliance submissively upon his Word, into the clear light of the Cross, and of the love of Christ in the soul, it would have been to him a discipline of incomparable worth. If he had *wrestled* out, as Bunyan did from *his* conflicts, with no possibility of peace, and a determination of having no peace, but in Christ and in God's Word, it had been an element of power and light. But instead of this, he never entirely passed out of it into the clear light; he carried the involving folds of this gloom, in which sometimes he seemed to take a grim pleasure in wrapping himself, even to the end of life. He was always in some respect in the Valley of the Shadow of Death, and exclaiming with Job, "He hath set darkness in my path." He never seems to have felt, as such a strong

mind ought to have done, the amazing importance of being *settled* concerning the particular revelations of the Christian religion, by an unhesitating reception and most prayerful study of the Word of God. And his mind seemed sometimes obstinately to turn away from, and forget, the light shed as a flood from that Word upon the future dispensation of our being, to lose itself in conjectures, mysterious, solemn, awful, as if everything beyond the grave were absolutely unknown to us. His feeling in reference to the future world was much like that of Job, "Before I go whence I shall not return, even to the land of darkness, and the shadow of death; a land of darkness as darkness itself, and of the shadow of death without any order, and where the light is as darkness." Certainly his prevailing mood was much more this, than that of Paul; and his prevailing mode of reasoning on some points was rather that of a mind under the dimness of the old dispensation than the glory of the new.

He speaks, about this same period, in a letter to Mr. Fawcett, of his having "for a long while past fully felt the necessity of dismissing subtle speculations and distinctions, and of yielding an humble, cordial assent to the mysterious truth, just *as* and *because* the scriptures declare it, without inquiring, how can these things be?" But it is evident that in some respects he never *did* this, and that his mind was continually relapsing from the health and definiteness of divine revelation, into a state of vague, solemn, awful wonder, as to what he called the *absolute unknown* beyond the grave, the mysteries of that dread eternal hereafter. As an instance of this state of mind we may take the following paragraph from one of his letters, written even so late as the year 1834.

"It does always appear to me very unaccountable (among indeed so many other inexplicable things), that the state of the soul after death should be so completely veiled from our serious inquisitiveness. That in some sense it is proper

that it should be so, needs not be said. But is not the sense in which it is so, the *same* sense in which it is proper there should be *punitive* circumstances, privations, and inflictions, in this our sinful state? For one knows not how to believe that *some* revelation of that next stage of our existence would not be more influential to a right procedure in this first, than such an *absolute unknown*. It is true that a profound darkness, which we know we are destined ere long to enter, and soon to find ourselves in an amazing light, is a striking object of contemplation. But the mind still, again and again falls back from it disappointed and uninstructed, for want of some defined forms of reality to seize, retain, and permanently occupy it. In default of revelation, we have to frame our conjectures on some principle of analogy, which is itself arbitrary, and without any means of bringing it to the test of reason."

Now one is tempted to exclaim, in perusing such a passage, Can the man who writes this have ever seriously read the Scriptures? It may be said that Foster was not here speaking of the general doctrine of a future state of rewards and punishments, but of the default of any definite knowledge of our state *immediately* after death. But even thus, such language is absolutely unjustifiable on the ground of the information contained in the Word of God, and would seem totally inconsistent with a firm faith in the truth, or a serious examination of the meaning, of our blessed Lord's own declarations as to what takes place after death. There is no such thing as this *absolute unknown*, of which Foster speaks; on the contrary, the blank is so definitely filled up, the mystery is so much cleared away, that our Lord solemnly declares to us that if men will not believe for what is already written, neither would they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. A sentence which stands in singular and palpable contradiction against what Mr. Foster remarks about *some* revelation being more influential. He has introduced a similar train of reflections in one of his

Essays, but with a very different impression. But he seems to have been constantly wishing for something more clear and convincing than we have in the Word of God, in regard to the realities of the Eternal World, and constantly underrating the degree and decisiveness of that information ; or what is worse, shrinking back from its admission, and dreading its plain and direct interpretation. Nothing can be more unfortunate than such a state of mind in regard to the Scriptures, especially for a preacher of the Gospel ; and few things would render a teacher more unfitted for the instruction of others, in regard to some of the most essential points in the system of revealed truth.

His state of mind was somewhat like that of a disastrous eclipse, and all things looked in it as the vegetation and forms of the world look in an eclipse of the sun at noonday. It seemed as if, while he was advancing forward to the knowledge of Divine things, the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and to the possession of convictions and expanded views and a celestial experience, which would have armed him as with the sword of Michael against the powers of darkness, there had been a strange permission given to those powers to stop him. And they said, We cannot take from him what he has gained, but we will fasten him there ; he shall henceforward view all things only from his present limited point of view, and here we will bring to bear upon him all our suggestions of mysteries and difficulty, and if we cannot turn him from his integrity, we will make the very anguish and utterance of his uncertainties the means of shaking others. And he shall, at the least, never make any onset upon our kingdom, notwithstanding the towering pride of his intellect, and the grace of God in him. And in effect, Foster did for a season stop. He seems for a long time to have made little advance in religious knowledge, and little in religious zeal. His life was always pure, his nature noble, and his spirit was always hovering over the awful gulf of futurity,

and you might see a gloomy and terrible light reflected from the wings of the soul, as you followed its excursions; but you could seldom see it in the clear serene of heaven. You saw not the shining light shining more and more, unto the perfect day, but a path of involutions and anxieties, sometimes indeed running in that shining light, but sometimes crossing it at right angles and plunging into the darkness. His feelings were of an exquisite kindness and tenderness; his sympathies were strong and deep, notwithstanding his apparently misanthropic aloofness from society. His humility was genuine, his personal reliance upon Christ, towards the close of life, delightfully entire and satisfactory; and yet for a long period there was doubt and gloom.

The position of his mind seemed like that of a man in the dark, confident that he is near some vast, solid obstacle, but not daring to advance. He had a spiritual sense or instinct of the realities of the future world, like the feeling which makes a blind man know that things are near him, even without touching them. And he trembled at times, as a bewildered traveller might stand and tremble in the darkness, when convinced by the deep roar of falling waters near and below him, that he is on the brink of some tremendous verge, where he dare not stir one step without a guide. What avail would it be for him in such a case, to shout to others, who might be in the same position, There is nothing to fear, the gulf is not bottomless, and if you fall, you will come up unhurt! Why fear for thyself, O man, if thou art so sure of the divine benevolence at the bottom of this fall to others? This fear is the sacred instinct of the soul in the near presence of the reality. Though the soul does not see, or will not see, the form of the reality in the definite light of the Divine Word, yet it feels the reality almost as if it touched it.

It was under the power of this feeling that Foster lived and wrote. His very letters issue from the pressure of it; every coinage of his mind bears its stamp. He could not

help it, any more than he could the sense of his immortality. There was always in his soul a sense of vast, dread, illimitable *retribution in eternity*, to which all sinful beings are advancing, and from which the only escape is in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus *to those only* who in this world avail themselves of it. He felt this; he could not, did not, reason about it; he felt it. He questioned it, and yet he felt it. He shrunk back from it, and yet he felt it. It was with him by day and by night, an ever-brooding power and presence from the Eternal World, a truth that woke to perish never, "a master o'er a slave; a presence that was not to be put by." Beneath the pressure of questioned realities in the invisible world he wrote all his works, and they have, consequently, some of them, an overpowering solemnity. For he could not put off his heritage; his soul would be weighed down beneath it, notwithstanding all evasive doubts and shrinkings from its dread solemnity. There was within him

"That eye among the blind,
That, deaf and silent, read the eternal deep,
Haunted forever by the Eternal mind."

And amidst all the uncertainties of his religious experience, and all the vagueness of his views, perhaps there never was a man, who had a fuller, more constant, brooding sense of eternity, as a sense of eternal responsibility, and a danger of eternal ruin. And although custom lies upon our religious sensibilities, if they be not most anxiously cultivated, with a weight, as men advance into age, "heavy as frost, and deep almost as life," no religious deadness or insensibility or laxity of view ever delivered Foster from this powerful haunting sense of eternal retribution. We think we can detect it even in that late letter on the subject of the Divine penalty, even while summoning all his powers to resist the conviction. A letter, not indeed written in anything like the dotage of the mind in old age, for

Foster never lived to that, but bore his faculties with surprising vigor, beyond his three-score years and ten; but still written when the wheel is beginning to cease its revolutions at the cistern, and when they that look out at the windows be darkened. A letter full of the most surprising inconsistencies, of which the impression remaining on the mind is that of a being crushed beneath some heavy load, and writhing in vain to get out from it.

The manner of Mr. Foster's reasoning in that letter, combined with the tenor of his practical appeals to the conscience in his writings, reminds us irresistibly of what he himself has said to the "professed disbelievers in the Christian revelation of an imaginary heaven, and an equally fictitious hell." "You must allow me to doubt, whether you really feel in this matter all the confident assurance which you pretend. I suspect there are times, when you dare not look out over that field, for fear of seeing the portentous shapes there again; and even that they sometimes come close to present a ghastly visage to you through the very windows of your stronghold. I have observed in men of your class, that they often appear to regard the arrayed evidences of revealed religion, not with the simple aversion which may be felt for error and deception, but with that kind of repugnance which betrays a recognition of adverse power."

Just so the argument of Foster against the Scripture view of the eternity of future punishments, betrays not so much a persuasion, as the existence of agonizing doubt, and the recognition of adverse power.

We question if this will not also strike the mind in reading his letter to Dr. Harris, in which he speaks of the transcendently direful nature of a contemplation of the human race, if he believed the doctrine of the eternity of future misery; and speaks also of the "short term of mortal existence, absurdly sometimes denominated a *probation*." Mr. Foster, in writing this, must have absolutely forgotten what he

himself wrote in his introduction to Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, in regard to that very probation, and the shortness of it, and under this very denomination of a *probationary state*. He tells the careless man with the most overwhelming pressure of solemnity he can bring to bear upon his spirit, to "think of that existence during endless ages, an existence to commence in a condition *determined for happiness or misery by the state of mind which shall have been formed in this introductory period.*" "The whole term of life, diminutive as it is for a preparatory introduction to that stupendous sequel, is what our Creator has allotted to us, leaving to us no responsibility that it is not longer." And Mr. Foster draws from the actual shortness of the preparatory time at the uttermost, an argument, not against the goodness of God, but for the conscience of the guilty man, to convince *him* of the infinite madness of making it any shorter, of wasting any portion of it. He tells the man of the world of the rapidity of the course with which he is passing out of life, rejecting from him all care of life's one grand business, *the preparation for an eternal state*. He tells him that he is madly living as if this life had no connection with that future life, and as if that future life would have "no reference or relation to the previous and PROBATIONARY state." He adjures the idea of ETERNITY to overwhelm that spirit, whose whole scheme of existence embraces but a diminutive portion of time. He calls for the scene of the last judgment to present itself *in a glare* to the being whose conscience is in such awful repose. Let the thought of the Almighty *fulminate* on the mind of that mortal!

Here assuredly is that state most distinctly recognized, and the solemnity of it with great power enforced, *as a probationary state*, which Mr. Foster, at a later period, declared to be absurdly denominated a probation. But it was "in his haste" that he said it. We pass to a sketch

of the succeeding portion of his life before resuming this subject.

In the year 1800 Mr. Foster removed to Downend, about five miles from Bristol, where he preached regularly at a small chapel erected by Dr. Caleb Evans. Here he resided about four years, and then, "in consequence chiefly of the high testimony borne to his character and abilities by Mr. Hall, he was invited to become the minister of a Congregation meeting in Shepard's Barton, Frome." He removed thither in February, 1804, and in 1805 his great work, indeed *the* work, on which, as a grave profound classic in English Literature, his fame rests, was published. He was now thirty-five years of age. At this time a swelling in the thyroid gland of the neck compelled him for a season to relinquish preaching, and he gave up his charge, and devoted himself with much assiduity to a literary engagement as contributor to the *Eclectic Review*. "So fully was he occupied in this department of literature, that upwards of thirteen years elapsed, before he again appeared before the public in his own name."

In 1808 he was married to an admirable lady of congenial mind and feeling, to whom he had been engaged for five years. From the period of his marriage he lived a number of years at Bourton, a village in Gloucestershire, with a good deal of work and much serene domestic happiness. Though not settled in the ministry, he was preaching nearly every Sabbath, once or twice, for about seven years. In 1817 he became once more a resident and stated preacher at Downend, though for a few months only. In 1818 he delivered his *Discourse on Missions*. His sermon in behalf of the British and Foreign School Society, delivered the same year, was afterwards enlarged into the powerful *Essay on the Evils of Popular Ignorance*, and published in 1820. In 1821 he removed from Downend to Stapleton, within three miles of Bristol, and in 1822, at the earnest solicitation of his friends in Bristol, commenced

a series of fortnight lectures in Broadmead Chapel. His preparations for these lectures have been printed since his death, and contain some of the finest productions of his genius. He continued these lectures somewhat longer than two years, but on the settlement of Robert Hall at Bristol he relinquished the engagement as, in his own view, "altogether superfluous, and even bordering on impertinent." He observed that he should have very little more preaching, probably, ever, but should apply himself to the mode of intellectual operation, of which the results might extend much further, and last much longer.

In the year 1825 he wrote one of his most important and powerful essays, the Introduction to Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion. On occasion of the death of Mr. Hall, "a preacher," said Foster, "whose like or equal will come no more," instead of preaching the funeral sermon, which he declined by medical interdict, he published, in 1832, his Observations on Mr. Hall as a preacher, in connection with Dr. Gregory's Memoir of his life.

In a letter to Mr. Fawcett, in 1830, he says, "Pray, do you often preach? I have suffered an almost entire deposition from that office, by physical organic debility as the primary cause, and as an occasional one by choice, from having felt the great inconvenience and laboriousness of doing occasionally what I have been so long out of the practise of; so that for a long time past I have declined wholly our city pulpits, and never go higher than an easy unstudied discourse, now and then, in one or two of the neighboring country villages, where there is a stated ministry. Mr. Hall is in high physical vigor for the age of 66, while often suffering severely the inexplicable pain in his back, of which he has been the subject from his childhood. His imagination, and therefore the *splendor* of his eloquence, has considerably abated, as compared with his earlier and his meridian pitch, but his *intellect* is in the high-

est vigor ; and the character of his preaching is that of the most emphatically evangelical piety."

Of Foster's own last discourse in the series of fortnight lectures, he announces the subject thus : " I had a splendid subject—the three *Methodists* of Babylon, in the fiery furnace ; and perhaps I thought, and perhaps some of the auditors thought, that I did it tolerable justice." What would we not have given to have heard that sermon !

In 1832 Mr. Foster's estimable and beloved wife was taken from him, and thenceforward the ten years of favor, added to his three-score, were to be passed in great loneliness. His " old and most excellent friend Hughes" was also taken in 1833. " But for having looked to see the day of the month," says he, " in order to date this letter, the day would have passed off without my being aware that it is the day that completes my sixty-third year, what is denominated the *grand climacteric*. I deeply deplore not having lived to worthier purpose, both for myself and others ; and earnestly hope and pray, that whatever of life remains may be employed much more faithfully to the great end of existence. But with this self-condemning review, and with nothing but an uncertain, and possibly small remainder of life in prospect, how emphatically oppressive would be the conscious situation, if there were not that great propitiation, that redeeming sacrifice, to rest upon for pardon and final safety."

We have spoken of Foster's constitutional and habitual horror of the labor of writing. It could not have been imagined, till the publication of these volumes of letters, what an amazing amount of time and labor he spent in the work of revision, remoulding and condensing, and sometimes amplifying his sentences. The new edition of his *Essays on Popular Ignorance* was in effect re-written ; he made a new work of it ; and the revision occupied him several months. For weeks he says he was at it, " without intermission or leisure to read a newspaper, review or

anything else," having never undergone the same quantity of hard labor within the same number of weeks together in his whole life. "My principle of proceeding was to treat no page, sentence or word with the smallest ceremony; but to hack, split, twist, prune, pull up by the roots, or practise any other severity on whatever I did not like. The consequence has been alterations to the amount, very likely, of several thousands." "It is a sweet luxury, this book-making; for I dare say I could point out scores of sentences, *each one* of which has cost me *several hours* of the utmost exertion of my mind to put it in the state in which it now stands, after putting it in several other forms, to each one of which I saw some precise objection, which I could at the time have very distinctly assigned. And in truth there are hundreds of them to which I could make objections as they *now* stand, but I did not know how to hammer them into a better form." We must confess we wish that instead of so much of this revising work, Mr. Foster had spent the same amount of labor on some additional production.

This kind of labor, so much of it, was not necessary for the perfection of his work, as is manifest from the consideration of his greatest production, the *Essays*, which do not seem to have been thus labored, and are in fact in a more perfect style. The *Essay Introductory to Doddridge's* work was written by Mr. Foster, according to his own account, as a mere task, a piece of hard, unwilling, compulsory labor, throughout; a perfect fag. He had made the contract for it with the bookseller; it was so long unfulfilled, that the whole edition of Doddridge lay upon the shelves of the warehouse for years, unbound, waiting for the promised *Essay*, much to the damage of the publishers. He had himself a very poor opinion of the work, to which he was actually driven by dint of expostulations and remonstrances, and he says "it was almost all labored under a miserable feeling of contraction and sterility." And

yet it is one of the most powerful Essays in the language, and it sparkles with illustrations, which are the result of profound thought and a Miltonic imagination wrestling together, while it is pervaded, more than any other of Foster's writings, by the solemnity of the Retributions of Eternity. A man who could write thus on compulsion ought to have written more abundantly of his own free will.

But perhaps the happiest example of Foster's fineness, originality, and affluence of suggestive thought in connection with a powerful imagination, are to be found in what is called in the biography, his *Journal*. This is a series of striking reflections, observations, and analogies, extended over a number of years, and marked to the amount of some eight or nine hundred. They are not all given by his biographer; some hundreds seem to be omitted; for what reason we cannot tell. Certainly, articles which had been prepared and left on record by Mr. Foster himself, with great care, must have been far more worthy of publication than so strange and inconsistent a letter as the one to a young minister, which the writer himself, could he have been questioned as to its publication, would probably have condemned to the flames. On what principle any part of the *Journal* is kept back, while the letter is published, we cannot imagine. The pages occupied with this *Journal* are among the most intensely interesting, vivid, and suggestive portions of the volume. The observations seem often to be the result of a whole day's experience, or study, or self-reflection, or inspection of others, or meditation on the processes of nature, in a single sentence; reminding us of a remark once made by Dr. Chalmers in answer to a question put to him by a foreigner, What is John Foster now about? "Why, sir, he is thinking as intensely as ever he can, at the rate of about a sentence a week." The analogies and illustrations are like flashes of light, in their sud-

denness, with the illumination remaining as the steady light of day.

The massive hardihood and sternness of thought distinguishing all Mr. Foster's writings is owing in great measure to the gloomy depth and accuracy with which he had gauged the boundlessness of human depravity. If there was one fact that had the mastery over his mind, and colored all its delineations, it was that of the desperate and black corruption of our nature. No man saw more clearly, or painted more strongly and impressively, the native predominant evils of the heart and of society. Instinctively he stripped off all disguises, and at a touch what was fair to the outside appeared full of rottenness. There reigned in his soul an indignant contempt of all forms of pride and hypocrisy, and of all cajoling of the race into a complacent sense of goodness, conveyed sometimes in sentences of withering sarcasm, sometimes in instances, as points, from which the malignity and intensity of supreme evil seem to hiss off, as it were, into the atmosphere. He keeps up in delineations with the furrow of fiery ruin laid open by the Apostle to the Gentiles. He was the first to unveil to the English nation the frightfulness of an *education* in such depravity ; to bring out into notice the hideous features of a race of children, who " know no good that it is to have been endowed with a rational rather than a brute nature, excepting that they thus have the privilege of tormenting brutes with impunity."

The work on the Evils of Popular Ignorance is in many respects the greatest of Foster's works ; it shows to best advantage the comprehensiveness of his views, the prodigious strength of his mind, and the intense energy with which it worked, on a subject that possessed his soul with a sense of its importance. For its burning, impetuous, cataractical, yet grave and steadfast tide of description ; for the concentration and continuity of an impression gloomy as night ; for the overwhelming power with which it takes

the convictions as by storm; for the strength and almost ferocious energy of its blows, blow after blow, as if you saw a giant sweating at his anvil, as if it were Vulcan forging the armor of Achilles, it has no instance to be brought in comparison. For the manner in which the strength of the English language is tasked in its combinations to express the conceptions of the writer, there is nothing but some pages in the *Paradise Lost* to be placed before it. There are passages in it, which make the same impression on the mind as Milton's description of hell, or of the Messiah driving the rebellious angels out of heaven. In all English literature it were vain to look for passages of greater power, than the author's delineations of the abominations of Popery, and of Pagan depravity and misery. And there are other passages of equal sublimity and power of imagination in more captivating exercise.

The paragraph on the effect of a conscience darkened in ignorance, or almost gone out as the inward light and law of the being, is one of the most striking instances of the grand part which Foster's imagination was made to play in the exhibition of his subjects.

“As the man moves hither and thither on the scene, he has his perception of what is existing and passing on it; there are continually meeting his senses numberless moving and stationary objects; and among the latter there are many forms of limitation and interdiction; there are high walls and gates and fences, and brinks of torrents and precipices; in short, an order of things on all sides signifying to him, with more or less of menace,—Thus far and no farther. And he is in a general way obsequious to this arrangement. We do not ordinarily expect to see him carelessly violating the most decided of the artificial lines of warning-off, nor darting across those dreadful ones of nature. *But the while, as he is nearly destitute of that faculty of the soul which would perceive (analogously to the effect of coming in contact with something charged with that element*

which causes the lightning), the awful interceptive lines of that other arrangement, which he is in the midst of as a subject of the laws of God, we see with what insensibility he can transgress those prohibitory significations of the Almighty will, which are to devout men as lines streaming with an infinitely more formidable than material fire. And if we look towards his future course of life, the natural sequel foreseen is, that those lines of divine interdiction, which he has not conscience to perceive as meant to deter him, he will seem nevertheless to have through his corruptions, a strong recognition of, but in another quality,—as temptations to attract him.”

From about the period of his sixtieth year, Mr. Foster prepared little or nothing for the press. His last article in the *Eclectic Review* was published in 1839. From the year 1806 to that period he had written one hundred and eighty-five articles: sixty-one of these were collected and published in two volumes by Dr. Price, the Editor of the *Eclectic*, only twenty of which have been republished in this country. From the year 1830 we see the mind of this great writer mainly in his letters. They are filled with profound, solemn, interesting feeling and thought. He took great interest in political affairs, though necessarily a gloomy view. He had a most profound sense of the desperate depravity and selfishness of political intrigues, and an intense hatred of the domineering perniciousness of the Establishment.

In what manner the shades of solemnity were folding and deepening over his soul in the prospect of the eternal world, and what was the ground of his hope for pardon and blessedness, in “*the grand Futurity*,” a few short extracts from his letters will strikingly show. They reveal a solemn anxiety inconsistent with that dismissal of the doctrine of eternal punishment, of which we are to speak. “Whatever may be our appointed remaining time on earth,” says he, in a letter in 1836, “we are sure it is

little enough for a due preparation to go safely and happily forward into that eternal hereafter." In 1837, speaking of the death of a friend, "I have regretted to understand that she was a confirmed Socinian—greatly regretted it; for it does appear to me a tremendous hazard to go into the other world in that character. The exclusion from Christianity of that which a Socinian rejects, would reduce *me* instantly to black *despair*." "It is fearful to think what the final account must be at the award of infallible Justice, for the immense multitude of accountable creatures."

In a letter of retrospection, to a dear friend, in 1840, he says, "The pain of a more austere kind than that of pensiveness is from the reflection to how little purpose, of the highest order, the long years here, and subsequently elsewhere, have been consumed away—how little sedulous and earnest cultivation of internal piety—how little even mental improvement—how little of zealous devotement to God and Christ, and the best cause. Oh, it is a grievous and sad reflection, and drives me to the great and only resource, to say, God be merciful to me a sinner! I also most earnestly implore that in one way or another what may remain of my life may be better, far better, than the long protracted past. PAST! What a solemn and almost tremendous word it is, when pronounced in the reference in which I am repeating it!"

In 1841, confined with illness, he says, "The review of life has been solemnly condemnatory—such a sad deficiency of the *vitality* of religion, the devotional spirit, the love, the zeal, the fidelity of conscience. I have been really amazed to think how I could—I do not say have been, *content* with such a low and almost equivocal piety, for I never *have* been at all content—but, how I could have *endured* it without my whole soul rising up against it, and calling vehemently on the Almighty Helper to come to my rescue, and never ceasing till the blessed experience was attained. And then the sad burden of accumulated guilt! and the

solemn future ! and life so near the end ! O, what dark despair but for that blessed light, that shines from the Prince of Life, the only and the all-sufficient Deliverer from the second death. I have prayed earnestly for a genuine penitential, living faith on him." "There is much work yet to be done in this most unworthy soul ; my sole reliance is on Divine assistance, and I do hope and earnestly trust (trust in that assistance itself), that every day I may yet have to stay on earth will be employed as part of a period of persevering and I may almost say *passionate* petitions for the Divine mercy of Christ, and so continue to the last day and hour of life, if consciousness be then granted."

Again, in 1842, "Within and without are the admonitions that life is hastening to its close. I endeavor to feel and live in conformity to this admonition ; greatly dissatisfied with myself and my past life, and having and seeking no ground of hope for hereafter, but solely the all-sufficient merits and atonement of our Lord and Saviour. If that great cause of faith and hope were taken away, I should have nothing left."

In October, 1843, the very month of his death, he says to a friend, "I have now not the smallest expectation of surviving a very few months. The great and pressing business is therefore to prepare for the event. That is, in truth, our great business always ; but is peculiarly enforced in a situation like mine. It involves a review of past life ; and oh, how much there is to render reflection painful and alarming. Such a review would consign me to utter despair, but for my firm belief in the all-sufficiency of the mediation of our Lord." In his last letter to Mr. Hill, he says, "What would become of a poor sinful soul, but for that blessed, all-comprehensive sacrifice, and that intercession at the right hand of the Majesty on High?"

Of the same affecting and solemn character was the tenor of his last conversations. He frequently spoke of the value,

of prayer, and often turned the conversation on the subject of the separate state. "After the death of any friend, he seemed impatient to be made acquainted with the secrets of the invisible world. On one occasion of this kind, rather more than a twelvemonth before his own decease, he exclaimed, They don't come back to tell us! and then, after a short silence, emphatically striking his hand upon the table, he added, with a look of intense seriousness, But we shall know *some time*."

"Speaking of his weakness, to one of his two servants, who had lived with him for about thirty years, he mentioned some things, which he had not strength to perform; and then added, But I can pray, and that is a glorious thing. On another occasion he said to his attendant, Trust in Christ, trust in Christ? On another time the servant heard him repeating to himself the words, O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory? Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ." Thus in the night, entirely alone, but Christ with him, October 16th, 1843, all that was mortal of a being most "fearfully and wonderfully made," slept peacefully, and expired.

We must now recur to that grand subject of interest in these volumes, on which we have already dwelt in part. We have referred to Mr. Foster's letter to a young minister on the eternity of future punishments, in which he attempted what he called a moral argument against it. This letter was written so late as the year 1841. But in the meantime, what shall we say of the moral argument *in support* of it, all the while working itself out in Mr. Foster's personal convictions as to the *sole* ground of *safety* in eternity, and enforced so powerfully, with such impressive, such awful solemnity in some of his writings? What a strange and unaccountable inconsistency for such a man in his letters, in his spontaneous convictions, in his practical writings, to be speaking of the *second death*, of the inevitableness of

despair without reliance upon Christ, of the *perdition* in eternity, except there be that reliance, and at the same time instituting an argument, according to which there is really no second death, there can be no such thing as despair, and no possibility of perdition ! According to which, if a man had asked Mr. Foster, " Sir, what *is* that second death, of which you speak ?" he must have answered, " I know nothing about it, except that it is *not* eternal, but is a mere introduction into everlasting life !" What has a man to do with despair, who believes that the whole human race will be everlastingly blessed, and who, if he reasons closely, will have to acknowledge that any prior discipline of human misery would but enhance the rapture of the blessedness, and might actually be a thing, in the long run, to be chosen ?

The inconsistency of which we speak, appears more marvellous still, on comparing the letter to a young minister with Mr. Foster's Introductory Essays to Doddridge's Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul. It would scarcely have been imagined that two productions, so dissimilar, so contrary, could have proceeded from the same writer. The whole solemnity and power of the Essay is owing to the doctrine of an endless retribution ; take that away, and it is as a gaseous jelly, which sparkled with phosphorescence in the night, but becomes a cold putrid pulp in the day. Take away the belief of the reader in the writer's deep personal convictions of the truth of what he is uttering, and you disenchant his pages of their power. It is the belief that the consequences impending are eternal, that creates that power. The very blade of Mr. Foster's keen weapon was forged in the fires of that endless perdition, which, in the letters to a young minister, he denies ; its handle sparkles with gems that flash forth the warnings of insufferable ruin. He bids the soul tremble at the thought of dying unprepared ; he makes it acknowledge that the " entirely depending interest of its futurity is vast and

eternal." He bids it think of that existence during endless ages,—an existence to commence in a condition determined for happiness or misery by the state of mind which shall have been formed in this introductory period. He bids it regard the melancholy phenomenon of a little dependent spirit, voluntarily receding from its beneficent Creator, directing its progress away from the eternal source of light, and life, and joy, and that on a vain presumption of being under the comet's law, of returning at last to the sun !

He bids the man of the world remember that nothing will be gained, and ALL BE LOST, by refusing to think of it. He tells him that a preparation to meet God is that one thing, of which the failure is PERDITION. He tells him that no tempest nor shock of an earthquake would affright him so much as this horrible neglect of his eternal salvation, if it could be suddenly revealed to him in full light. He speaks of the *supreme* interest of his existence, and of the *whole question* of safety or utter ruin, as depending. He speaks of the necessity now of "applying to the soul the redeeming principle, without which it will PERISH." He speaks of the madness of delay. "The possibility of dying unprepared takes all the value from even the highest probability that there will be prolonged time to prepare ; plainly, because there is no proportion between the fearfulness of such a hazard, and the precariousness of such a dependence." He tells man that his corrupt nature, if untransformed in this world, must be miserable in the next. He tells him that the subject is one which he cannot let go, "without abandoning himself to the dominion of death." And he arrays the melancholy spectacle of a "crowd of human beings in prodigious, ceaseless stir to keep the dust of the earth in motion, and then to sink into it, while all beyond is darkness and desolation !"

Now what is the meaning of all this ? To suppose that these solemn adjurations were used merely to keep up an appearance of belonging to the orthodox faith on this subject,

would be revolting in the extreme ; it would make the reader throw the book from him in contempt and disgust ; but to suppose that the author used such language because, though he himself did not believe the truth which it would be held to convey, he nevertheless thought it would make the book more impressive—would be very little better. And what would have been the effect, if the author had prefaced the work with something like the following announcement:—The writer of these pages does not believe in the doctrine assumed in the work to which they are introductory, namely, that the retributions of eternity are eternal, and holds very different ideas as to the mercy of the Universal Father, from those ordinarily held by the divines of Dr. Doddridge's mode of thinking. Nevertheless, something was necessary to give the work a credit and currency with those who hold his opinions ; and besides, it must be confessed, that nothing but the idea of eternal consequences is of any weight either to bring men to religion or to keep them from vice.

The effect of such a declaration, should the reader of the work keep it in view, would be almost ludicrous, if the subject itself were not to solemn for such an emotion ; it would be powerfully neutralizing as to any deep impression ; nor could any statement as to the author's belief in limited punishment retain under any efficacious impulse of amendment, the careless hearts to which the work was directed. It would be like attempting to hold a ship, that is dragging her anchor in a storm, by a kedge attached to her bulwarks.

What shall we say of the conflicting states of mind revealed in Mr. Foster's intensely interesting epistolary biography, and intensely powerful practical writings on this great subject ? From the age of seventy we must revert back to the seed-time of his opinions, and we shall find the noxious root of a plant exhaling poison that grew into obstinate toughness, in spite of the accompanying growth of

all gracious herbs. We have seen that Mr. Foster's mind, richly endowed as it was, seemed to make a disastrous pause in the comparative twilight of Divine truth. He seems to have felt it himself. And the clue to a solution in part may be found in the 21st letter in the biographical collection, in which Foster says he has just been reading an author, "who maintains with very great force of reasoning, that no man could, in any situation, have acted differently from what he has done." "Though I do not see how to refute his argument," says Foster, "I feel as if I ought to differ from his opinion. He refers to Jonathan Edwards as a powerful advocate of the same doctrine. He says such an expression as, I will exert myself, is absurd. It is an expression which, notwithstanding, I am inclined to repeat, as I view the wide field of duty before me."

That this book had a lasting effect upon Foster's state of mind and trains of opinion, is manifest from a letter written about a year after this date, in which he runs the circle of the reasoning of a perfect Necessitarian, and consoles himself, amidst his despairing views of the wretched state of man, with the maxim, Whatever is, is right. "If sin be traced up to its cause," says he, "that cause will be found to have been—the *nature and state of man*; but this cause was precisely so fixed by the Creator, and evidently with a determination that this fatal consequence should follow; or he fixed it *so*, that he saw this consequence most certainly would follow. He who fixed the first great moving causes, appointed all their effects to the end of the world. Whatever is, is right. Thus, regarding God as strictly the cause of all things, I am led to consider all things as working his high will; and to believe that there is neither more nor less evil in the world than he saw accurately necessary toward that ultimate happiness, to which he is training, in various manners, all his creatures. In this view, too, I can sometimes commit myself to his hands,

with great complacency, certain that he will do for me, in all respects, that which is the best."

Now this reasoning was precisely that which might well have led to utter and disastrous *Universalism*. But Foster was saved from that, though he here seems ready to throw himself, and his whole system of theology, into the central involutions of the chain of necessity from eternity. The theory that sin is the necessary means of the greatest good, involved, in a mind like Foster's, such a palpable accusation of the Divine benevolence, that while writhing in the folds of that moral anaconda, there was no resource to his soul, shrinking from the fatal consequence, but to throw himself on the conclusion, that since men were *of necessity* sinners for the greatest good, they would be also *of necessity* saved, for the greatest happiness; God, the author of this system, would conduct it safely to its end, and therefore the anxious, self-accusing, self-condemned mortal, might, at times, under the comfort of being a certain link in the chain of Necessity, commit himself with great complacency into God's hands. The whole chain passes indeed through the medium of sin, but it is only to come out brighter in the atmosphere of eternal glory.

If this was, at any time, any prominent source of Foster's complacency of mind, it may be asked, could he at the same time have been intelligently resting his hopes for eternity upon God's free sovereign mercy to the sinner for the sake of Christ? We believe that at times there was a great occultation in Foster's mind, and a sad veiling from it of the true nature and glory of the atonement; and that under the influence of such trains of reasoning and such grappling with difficulties insurmountable by the human reason, he did not accept fully, heartily, the Bible view of man as a sinner wholly and solely to blame, and saw not clearly, fully, in joyful experience, the Bible view of salvation to the penitent, as wholly, solely of grace. He passed into a better state of mind, but his abiding horror of eternal

misery, unaccompanied by an anchor of the soul, in the depths of God's word on that subject, tossed him perpetually on a sea of doubt. In the same degree it palsied his plans and efforts after usefulness, and diffused over his soul, in reference to the missionary enterprise, a chilling atmosphere, in which the zeal of an Apostle himself would have frozen. Combined with the latent influences of his prejudices in favor of the scheme of necessity, it sometimes brought him to the verge of a startling irreverence in his conclusions. He dismisses the whole subject of the missionary enterprise, on one occasion, with the summary sentence, that if the sovereign Arbiter had INTENDED the salvation of the race, it must have been accomplished! The intimation in his train of argument is, that he did not intend it, but so far as he did, it will certainly be accomplished, and therefore there is no great need of impotent creatures like ourselves, amidst such a sea of troubles of our own, taking much care about it.

Just so, in the same letter to Dr. Harris, Foster dismissed the common representations of the Deity as being deeply moved with compassion for the heathen, and earnestly intent on human salvation, with the exclamation, or perhaps we should say the daring sneer, "And this is the Almighty Being, whose single volition could transform the whole race in a moment!" The tone of this letter, whatever excellencies there be in it, is like that of Cain, "Am I my brother's keeper?" And Cain himself might as well have answered the Deity, "Thou mightest by a single volition have removed my brother Abel from my sight and taken away my temptation. Thou didst never INTEND that I should not kill him." Or Adam himself might have answered for *his* sin, "Thou mightest have veiled the forbidden tree from my vision. Thou didst never INTEND that I should not eat of the fruit of it." We acquit Foster of all impiety in such reasoning, though the tone of it savors in one part more of the spirit of Cain, and in another of

that of Jonah, "I do well to be angry," than of the spirit of Paul or of John. Nor can any one fail to remark the different manner of reasoning in regard to the depravity of the heathen, employed by Foster, and that employed in the first chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. The inspired writer condemns man wholly as without excuse, and justifies the ways of God to man; the uninspired writer excuses the depravity of man as a thing forced upon him, an element of dire necessity, and condemns God as annexing an eternal retributive penalty for such depravity!

We acquit Foster of all impiety of spirit, but he certainly indulged almost to the last degree of permissible freedom, and to the verge of presumption and irreverence, in his speculations on this subject. His own mind was so tortured with it, with the scene of human existence, as "a most mysteriously awful economy, overspread by a lurid and dreadful shade," that he had to "pray for the piety to maintain an humble submission of thought and feeling to the wise and righteous disposer of all existence." But he carried out the prejudices of his own mind with a degree of independence amounting to obstinacy, and not at all characterized by that profound submissiveness to the Divine Wisdom, which on this, as on every other subject, we should have supposed so superior an intelligence as Foster's would have exercised. And late in life we can see coming out in his opinions the ineffaceable mark which that book on the system of necessity had left upon his mind.

Besides this work, Foster speaks of an old and nearly unknown book, which he must have seen at an early period, in favor of universal restitution. A book which made an impression on a mind like Foster's, was likely to make it deep; and if he met these two books together, the currents of thought would run into one another with great power. The scheme of necessity at one end comes fitly out in restitution at the other. If Foster had been at this time deep in the Scriptures, neither of these works could have much

affected him; and there may have been some radical distortion in his view of some doctrines, which he accepted without hesitation, that made him shrink back from others in the plain truth. Truth in the Scriptures leads on to truth; but if a man's view of the first step be distorted, he may easily be turned aside from the second. If Mr. Foster believed that every individual soul was created evil by the Supreme Deity, there is little cause to wonder at the dreadful struggle in his mind in regard to what he conceived to be eternal punishment for the inevitable result of such creation. If he did not believe the depravity of man to be voluntary, but threw that depravity upon God as his creation, then, indeed, he *could not* receive the doctrine of an endless retribution, and still hold to the goodness of God. And we are inclined to think that this was in some measure the awful dilemma of his mind; for he dismisses the whole subject in his letter with the reckless argument that if *the very nature of man as created, every individual, by the Sovereign Power*, be in such desperate disorder, then we cannot conceive that the race thus impotent will be eternally punished for that impotence.

Now, it is a most remarkable fact that Mr. Foster himself, in his Introduction to Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, has taken up and rebuked just this angry argument, as supposed to be used by a desperately careless man, as an excuse or almost a justification for his stupid and defying indifference to consequences, from the *moral impotence of our nature*. But he does not *there* use the astounding argument, with which, as a desperate slug, he has loaded his letter. He replies in a very different way. "The reasoning faculty of such a man is a wretched slave, that will not, and dare not, listen to one word in presence and in contravention of his passions and will. The only thing there would be any sense in attempting would be, to press on him some strong images of the horror of such a deliberate self-consignment to destruction, and of the monstrous

enormity of taking a kind of comfort in his approach to the pit, from the circumstance that a principle in his nature leads him to it; just as if, *because there is that in him which impels him to perdition, it would therefore not be he that will perish*. Till some awful blast smite on his fears, his reason and conscience will be unavailing."

Is it not remarkable to the last degree, that Mr. Foster should have rebuked as "monstrous," a mode of reasoning in behalf of the individual, which he himself uses in behalf of the race? Because there is that in the race, which impels it to perdition, Mr. Foster argues that therefore the race will not perish. But when the same "moral impotence of our nature" is urged by the hardened man, as if, on account of it, it will not be *he* that will perish, the reasoning faculty of such a man is justly asserted to be a wretched slave. That, however, which ought to have been rebuked as itself a "monstrous enormity" and a hideous distortion of theology, is the supposition that a *created moral impotence* can be the subject of punishment at all; or rather, in the first place, the outrageous supposition that there is such a thing as a *created moral impotence*, and in the second place, if there is, that such a creation can be punished. It might be called an argument black with the smoke of the pit, for it must be malignant spirits that delight so to obscure the ways of God to man. But the smoke which issues in such a jet from the close of Mr. Foster's letter is not so much, as by him assumed, against the doctrine of eternal punishment, as against any punishment at all.

But where did Mr. Foster learn this truly despairing theology, which prepared him so fatally to listen to the arguments of Necessity and Universal Restitution? He could not so have read the Scriptures. It must have been the malignant intrusion of a darkening philosophy, which was set, as an heir-loom of his education, in the recesses of his mind, and wove a tissue of palsyng lurid doubt through one whole region of his speculations. It was this,

and not the eternity of punishment, that was to him as a shirt of fire thrown over the body of his theology.

Where did these principles come from, and whence their singular outbreak at so late a period in life, as if some demoniac art had "buried the seed and kept it artificially torpid, that it might be quickened into germination" at a time when there would be less questioning of its nature, less suspicion of its truth! If it came as an element of Foster's instruction in his early days, it reminds us of his own warning "that whatever entwines itself with the youthful feelings, maintains a strange tenacity, and seems to insinuate into the vitality of the being. How important to watch lest what is thus combining with its life, should contain a principle of moral death!" And it may be considered the master policy of the Spirit of Evil to put principles into the mind beforehand, under the guise of truth, which it is foreseen will act as powerfully *against* the truth, as if there were "a shield invisibly held by a demon's hand," or if not act against it, will veil and darken it, will fetter and perplex it, and make it enclose the soul like a net, instead of surrounding it like a luminous atmosphere.

It was just thus that even a mind of such power, and a soul of such undoubted piety, as Mr. Foster's became *entangled* in the truth, instead of walking at liberty and illuminated by it. Accursed by the intrusion of the mud and poison of such philosophy into the clear running stream of the Word of God! Could it be seen as mud, it would be rejected as mud; but men drink of it as the water of life. How dark a stuff is mere human speculation! What a series of caves are the recesses of the mind consigned to it; recesses of such depth, that if you take a light to examine them, you find the air itself is mephitic, and you are in danger of having your eyes put out by the bats that fly from them.

But Mr. Foster's argument, concerning "the moral impotence of the race," does not altogether wear the air of a

sincere conviction even in his own mind. It seems to have been a sort of angry exaggeration and distortion of the scriptural view of human depravity, which he threw out in the impatience of a tempted spirit, to justify his efforts against the awful reality pressing on his soul. He shields himself behind an angry and irreverent *if*; for he did not dare to put the supposition in the shape of an assertion. Grant the *if* indeed, and the conclusion follows. If God himself created "a desperate disorder," it follows that he created the inevitable results of that disorder; and if so, then both the disorder and its results are good; for an absolutely and infinitely good being can create nothing evil. Nor is it conceivable that punishment of any kind should be annexed to a disorder, of which God himself is the author, unless, indeed, the punishment also be considered as a good, leading to a higher good, which it is not, if it be eternal. It cannot be considered a good for the wicked, however it may subserve the interests of the universe of God.

But Foster's mind is occupied with the fate of the wicked exclusively, and their salvation *at all hazards* is resolved upon. The care of the good, the effect of sin upon them, released from an eternal retribution, the necessity of some penal safeguard for the universe, the inevitable failure of the Atonement, without such a safeguard, the demand through all eternity for an adequate manifestation of the Divine justice, all these great considerations are put out of view; they are not *permitted* to occupy the attention; or if spoken of, they are presented as "lightly assumed and presumptuous maxims respecting penal example in the order of the divine government," while the doubt as to the Divine goodness from "the awfulness of the economy" of eternal retribution is morbidly enlarged and dragged into notice.

Mr. Foster seems to have written some of these letters in a terrific mood. It is as if we saw a Christian Diogenes

in his tub. It is as if Job were before us on his dunghill giving vent to the bitterness of a wounded spirit. And there are some vast sneers at the mode of preaching in the exhibition of the divine compassion, which are as if Satan had stood by the road-side when our Saviour wept over Jerusalem, and had exclaimed, And this is the Being who could by a single volition make the soul of every person in Jerusalem receive him with delight!

Aye! and it *was* Satan by the road-side in Foster's own mind. And instead of a bold unhesitating appeal in answer from the Word of God, we hear again the hiss of the serpent! "Perhaps there is some pertinence in a suggestion which I recollect to have seen in some old and nearly unknown book in favor of universal restitution." The hiss of the serpent, old indeed and pertinent! *Has* God said, ye shall not eat? Yet God doth know ye shall not surely die. Apollyon in this conflict has taken from Foster's hand the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, and in its place has slipped into his grasp a figurative symbol or accommodation of that Word, and the power of the Word is all gone. And instead of the voice, *Ἕπαγε ὀπίσω μου, Σατανᾶ, Get thee behind me Satan*, or the mighty word, *γέγραπται, it is written*, we hear the tongue of unbelief—*strongly figurative expressions!* A man like Bunyan would have recorded this style of experience as a besetment by the fiends in the Valley of Tophet, and with the greatest truth and accuracy; and what seems amazing is the morbid craving after doubt, the voracity with which suggestions of difficulty and darkness are seized and ruminated upon, to the exclusion of what is clear and incontrovertible, so that at length light seems to retire, and the clouds roll thick and heavy over the firmament.

Amidst these doubts and difficulties, wrestling with them and grimly pressing on, beneath the "lurid and dreadful shade of a mysteriously awful economy," we behold this great mind out at sea, amidst darkness, hurricane, the wind

howling, the waves roaring. Sometimes the image is as that of a powerful steamer, thrown on her side by a mountain billow, her fires still burning, her engine crashing on, her wheels on one side buried and ploughing the deep, on the other as iron wings thundering in the air amidst the tempest. For with Foster's mind it *was* a tempest; and if he speaks of it, but briefly and calmly, it was because all his emotions, as stirred by mental conflicts, were compressed with a severity of condensation that allowed of no noisy or superficial escape. The great doubt with him supplied the place of ten thousand minor ones; for it was a doubt even as to the benevolence of the Divine economy; a temptation which in such a mind wrought with a force terrible and inevitable. The wind that raised the waves, compressed them and kept them from breaking, or the ocean had been sheeted with foam. He had piety to pray for submission, and God's arm held him, and amidst all conflicts he never failed to exercise a prayerful, watchful faith in God's merciful superintending providence over his own life and destiny.

There is a striking resemblance between his experience, and that of the author of the 73rd Psalm, though absolutely the reverse in almost every point, and a resemblance of powerful contrast. The scepticism in the Psalmist's mind was in regard to the allowed prosperity of the wicked, and the seeming want and denial in the divine economy, of any adequate retribution. It took such a deep hold of the soul, and spread such a "lurid and mysterious shade" over God's dispensations that the mind was almost driven from its balance; the feet of the saint had well nigh gone, his steps had almost slipped, and he was on the point of renouncing his faith in the goodness of the Deity. He was losing his hold on the goodness of God, *because it seemed to him that God had no retributive justice*. He was brought back, his feet were placed upon the rock, he was brought as a madman or a beast to his senses, by coming into God's

sanctuary, and there knowing what God *would do* in the eternal world. Was there ever a more instructive lesson? Was there ever a more instructive and solemn contrast and resemblance between this man's doubts and the cure of them, and Foster's doubts, with his *failure* of a cure, until he went not merely into the sanctuary of God, but into eternity itself! Foster's scepticism was as to the goodness of God, *because* of his justice, because of the undeniable looming up in the Christian system of the doctrine of ETERNAL RETRIBUTION! There was no resource in the sanctuary for that; there was no help in God's Word for that; nor any cure, even if one should rise from the dead, for the scepticism of a man who would not believe on the power of God's Word in that. If a man persisted in that doubt, there was no cure for such scepticism, but to go into eternity, to enter what Foster called the *absolute unknown*, but which, in the light of God's Word, is as absolute a *known* as, to the eye of faith, God could make it.

Pressed, then, by this doubt on the one side, and the awful language of the Word of God on the other, and yet exclaiming, It is too horrible! I *cannot* believe! ETERNITY! my soul shudders at the thought! God *cannot* be good, and yet appoint an eternal retribution!—exclaiming thus, and still holding to the scepticism arising from his limited view of the Divine government and attributes, and his intense fixedness of contemplation on one point, ETERNITY, we do not wonder that such a mind even as Foster's had well nigh slipped, nor that he, like the Psalmist, was as a beast before God. But let the contrast be profoundly marked. The Psalmist doubted of God's goodness *for want of retribution*. John Foster doubted of God's goodness *because of retribution*. The Psalmist was convinced and made submissive and trustful by what he was *assured would be* in eternity; but Foster was racked with distrust and doubt by what he *feared would be* in eternity. The Psalmist was convinced by God's Word, and rested on it;

but Foster's mind was thrown into anguish by the plain interpretation of that Word, and sought to evade it. Foster would not bow unhesitatingly before the Majesty of God's Word; he wanted a firm unquestioning trust in it; he wanted faith. His grand defect was a gloomy self-reliance on his own reasoning powers, in lieu of an humble inquiry, What saith the Lord? He stood like Thomas in the presence of his Lord, demanding the wounds in his side and the prints of the nails.

Nor can anything be more unphilosophical and erroneous in principle, or dangerous in example, than Mr. Foster's mode of reasoning on this subject. He demanded, on a subject of faith alone, an evidence destructive of the *nature* of faith. He demanded that God should *force* conviction on every mind. He demanded that the doctrine of eternal retribution should be so presented, "as to leave no *possibility* of understanding the language in a different, equivocal, or questionable sense;" that it should be so presented, as to render "*all doubt or question a mere palpable absurdity.*" Now, it is plain that this, in regard to anything that demands *belief*, and is not matter of experience, personal experience, is impossible. The very fact that God is *cannot be* so stated, as to leave no *possibility* of understanding it in a questionable sense. The doctrine of eternal retribution, as demanding belief, cannot be so stated as to preclude belief, and form experience. This world must be changed from a world of preparation for the eternal world into an experience of the realities of that world, before this can be the case; in other words, God's present system of probation under the power of the atonement, by which the penalty of his law is kept from execution, and men are warned of it, and commanded and urged to prepare against it, and to prepare for blessedness instead of misery in the future world, must be broken up; and instead of warnings of what is to come, and descriptions demanding belief, and the revelations of principles requiring faith,

the fires of the eternal world must be kindled in this ; and instead of a picture so graphic, and a description so awful, of the sinner in the place of torment, that anything beyond it would transcend the province of faith, and set aside all the laws of the human mind in regard to evidence, there must not only be exhibited here a sinner in torment, but every individual accountable agent must be put into the same torment, and then told *this* is what punishment means, and *this* is to be eternal ! But even then, this *latter* truth as to the *eternity* of retribution could not, without the experience also of that, be so framed as to preclude all possibility of question. For when the declaration had been made, and in the most explicit terms that human language can command, the mind of the sceptic might say, This cannot be ! there *must* be some other way of understanding this ! It is absolutely inconsistent with God's goodness, and *must* have a different interpretation. And if God should *speak* the truth audibly to every individual, every day of his existence, instead of leaving it simply written in his Word, the case would be the same. And if he should write it in characters of fire in the firmament, or make such a disposition of the planets in heaven, as that they should read it nightly to the soul, the case would be the same. There would be no possibility of *forcing* conviction without experience, no possibility of doing this, and still leaving to the soul the alternative of believing or disbelieving.

A conviction absolutely irresistible, can only be that of experience. But this would destroy the element of free-agency, and the possibility of the voluntary formation of character, the choice of principles of action. It would destroy the system of preparation for the Eternal World, under which we evidently are placed, and would make this world, instead of that, the world of retribution. On the theory that eternal retribution is true, it is impossible to make it a matter of *experience* in a world for the trial of character,

but it *must* be left as a matter of faith, as in the Scriptures. On the theory that it is *not* true, the Scriptures, which are the only authentic source of the idea of eternal retribution, and of all our information in regard to it, are, on that subject, glaring with falsehood. On the theory that it *is* true, there is no conceivable mode of presenting it to the mind *as an article of belief*, which the Scriptures have not taken; and their main power over the soul consists, in the acknowledgment even of those who deny the doctrine, in the awful terror in which the retributions of eternity are actually there shrouded. The dread power of the doctrine over Foster's own mind, proves the tremendous distinctness with which it has been *somewhere* revealed; but an original distinct source of it anywhere but in the Word of God it is impossible to find, except we take the universal intimations of conscience in answer to that Word, and the intimations of retribution in the souls of the heathen, as such a source.

Now it is a remarkable fact, that in regard to another fundamental truth of the Christian revelation, which Foster with his whole heart accepted, but which others have denied (as indeed, where is the truth revealed in the Scriptures which men may not deny, if they will, not being forced into conviction?) he adopted a mode of reasoning diametrically opposite to that which he attempted in regard to eternal retribution, and destructive of it. In one of his admirable letters to Miss Saunders, after a simple repetition of many of the passages in the Word of God in regard to the atonement, he meets the objector thus: "There are persons who revolt at such a view of the foundation of all our hopes, and would say, Why might not the Almighty, of his *mere immediate benevolence*, pardon the offences of his frail creatures when they repent, without any such intermediation and vicarious suffering? It is enough to answer, that Supreme Wisdom was the sole competent judge in the universe, of what was the plan most worthy of holiness and goodness; and that, *unless the New Testament be the most*

deceptive book that ever was written, the plan actually appointed is that of a suffering Mediator."

Now, a candid mind cannot read the New Testament free of all attempt to evade its plain meaning, without finding the truth of an eternal retribution *as fully and explicitly revealed as that of a vicarious Redeemer*. And to Foster's own objections on the score of his limited views of the Divine Benevolence, it is enough to answer, that Supreme Wisdom was the sole competent judge in the universe of what was the plan most worthy of holiness and goodness; and that unless the New Testament be the most deceptive book that ever was written, the plan actually appointed embraces an eternal retribution.

Furthermore, if the condition of faith in a suffering Mediator be the only condition of eternal salvation, a truth fully received by Foster, then, on the ground of his own reasoning in regard to eternal retribution, *that* truth ought to have been so presented "as to leave no *possibility* of understanding the language in a different equivocal or questionable sense;" it ought to have been so presented, as to render all "doubt or question a mere palpable absurdity." For if the danger of eternal retribution be so awful, as that God ought thus to *force* conviction on the soul, the only condition of eternal salvation is so infinitely important that he ought in like manner to force conviction of that also. And if any alleged possibility of doubt in regard to the meaning of the language is to be held a sufficient ground for denying the first, the same possibility is an equally sufficient ground for denying the last, and Foster's mode of reasoning would cut the soul equally from the belief in a suffering mediator and an eternal retribution. But Mr. Foster never seems to have had the shadow of a thought that the *condition* of eternal salvation, as the *only* condition, was not revealed with sufficient distinctness, or that, if it *be* the only condition, it ought to be revealed with a power absolutely overwhelming, and forestalling all *possibility* of doubt.

Why, then, attempt any such reasoning in regard to the truth of eternal retribution? In neither case was it possible to force conviction by experience; in both cases the evidence comes as near to absolute physical demonstration, as could have been, without violating the laws of the human mind in regard to *belief*. In both cases the evidence is positive, clear, incontrovertible; not to be set aside in any way without evasion; and in every way so palpable, that if it be denied, the New Testament instantly becomes *the most deceptive book that ever was written*.

Precisely the same reasoning annihilates the force of Mr. Foster's remarks as to the unreasonable shortness of the time of our probation, if an eternal retribution be the evil from which we are to escape. So, likewise, if the *condition of eternal salvation* be the *only* condition on which man can be saved, a truth which Foster constantly, and with all the power of his intellect, asserts, the shortness of the time of our probation is equally unreasonable for meeting that condition. The objection which would release the mind from its obligation to believe the one truth, is equally valid against the other; though of utter futility and falsehood in both cases. And the same may be said of what Foster has advanced in regard to the *preaching* of the truth of eternal retribution; namely, that if true, it ought to be screamed into the ears of every creature; it ought to be proclaimed, as with the blast of a trumpet, "inculcated and reiterated, with ardent passion, in every possible form of terrible illustration, no remission of the alarm; for the most prolonged thundering alarm is but as the note of an infant, a bird, or an insect, in proportion to the horrible urgency of the case." Assuredly the same may be said of the *ONLY* condition of eternal salvation, that if true, it ought to be proclaimed in like manner, as with the blast of a trumpet, no remission of the alarm.

And accordingly, it *is* so proclaimed; both these mighty doctrines being true, they are, with equal passion, incul-

cated and reiterated, in every possible form of terrible illustration. The sacred writers do but turn from the one to enforce the other, and use the one to burn in the other; so that the whole material of revelation, well-nigh, is the mutual support, reverberation, and "thundering," as well as persuasive proclamation of these truths. "Knowing the terror of the Lord, we persuade men." By his terrors we persuade them to embrace his love, and by his love we persuade them to shun his terrors. And this doctrine of a suffering Mediator, which Foster avows, is proclaimed with no less thundering alarm, than that doctrine of eternal retribution which he hastily and presumptuously rejects. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life; and he that believeth not on the Son, shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

It would have gone beyond even Mr. Foster's power in the use of human language, to have invented stronger terms than these, or to have proclaimed a suffering Mediator and eternal retribution in notes of more thundering alarm. For the passage is, in spiritual meaning, power and distinctness, like the crash of an earthquake, like the thunder of the Almighty from one end of heaven to the other. And not to name the scores of similar notes of alarm "proportioned to the horrible urgency of the case," the passages in the sixth Hebrews, 4-6, and tenth Hebrews, 26-31, are sufficient examples of the united and equally awful sanctions of terror in preaching both a suffering Mediator and eternal retribution. These two elements indeed are so combined in the Word of God, so indissolubly twisted together, so wrought into each other's fabric for mutual support, power, and illustration, that the one without the other is ineffectual, and can scarcely, by a logical mind, be received.

And, in fact, in the very next breath after the utterance of Foster's demand for thundering alarm on the ground of eternal retribution, he does himself declare that the larger

proportion of what is said of sinners and addressed to them in the Bible, is plainly in a tone of menace and of terror. And he repeats the deliberate affirmation of Dr. Watts, that of all the persons to whom his ministry had been efficacious, only *one* had received the first effectual impressions from the gentle and attractive aspects of religion; all the rest from the awful and alarming ones, the appeals to fear. And this, adds Foster, is all but universally the manner of the Divine process of conversion.

Now what an inconsequence is here! most strange indeed for a reasoner like Foster. We have him in one breath demanding, as the result, enforcement, and proof of a certain doctrine which he doubts, that it be proclaimed, reiterated and thundered without cessation; and in the next, declaring that such *is* the tenor of the Scriptures; and yet denying the doctrine, and in effect charging the Scriptures with proclaiming, reiterating and thundering an alarm, behind which there is no reality, and for which there is no foundation!

But worse than this, he proceeds to say that a number of ministers of his acquaintance have disbelieved the doctrine, but yet have thought they should better consult their usefulness by appearing to teach it; they were unwilling to incur the imputation of a want of orthodoxy, and they found the doctrine itself, even in its most terrible form, so strangely inefficacious to deter men from sin, that they "did not feel required to propound any qualification of it, since thoughtless and wicked men would be sure to seize on the mitigated doctrine to encourage themselves in their impenitence." This is but to say that, seeing that the truth failed to bring men to God, they thought they should be more useful by the inculcation of a LIE. The lie being supposed by most men to be imbedded in God's Word as the truth, and being found the only efficacious means of reclaiming men from sin, these ministers have deemed it most useful to make use of the lie! If this course be

charged upon the Scriptures, it is one of the worst forms of blasphemy and infidelity. And how can this consequence be avoided? On the supposition that the doctrine of eternal punishment is so taught in the Scriptures, as that nine-tenths of mankind find it there, and the most spiritual and heaven-instructed preachers proclaim it, and that it is, as thus understood, the sole element of irresistible efficacy in the Scriptures, on what ground can the conclusion be avoided that the Scriptures are a book of "infinite deception"? The difference between an eternal and a temporary retribution is infinite; the propounding of an eternal retribution, if it be not true, is an infinite lie. And they who lend themselves to this are acting on the principle, on which the great Apostasy has been builded, and to which is annexed the seal of the Divine reprobation, "Let us do evil that good may come."

Of the disingenuousness of such a course as Mr. Foster describes in the ministers of his acquaintance, their preaching or apparent preaching of this doctrine in public, their disbelief of it in private, and their whisperings and circulations of such disbelief in familiar circles, we need say nothing. We wonder that a mind of such independence, nobleness, integrity, sincerity, and fearlessness as Mr. Foster's, could have been warped at all into any excuse of such a course, much less any sanction of it by example. The habit of such casuistry must be powerful beneath the teachings of an Established Church, which propounds Thirty-Nine Articles of belief to be sworn upon as the conditions of earthly emolument and usefulness, with the understood provision that the oath of belief may or may not *mean* belief according to the opinion of the swearer. But out of the Establishment could it have been supposed that such casuistry would prevail? Let a man believe or disbelieve at his pleasure, and if he chooses, teach it wholly, or keep it to himself. "While it remained, was it not thine own? And when it was sold, was it not in thine

own power?" But to *appear* to preach it in public, and in private to circulate the mischief of unbelief; in public to proclaim the terrors of the Lord, in private to reduce them to a vast and glaring deception; in public to maintain the sanctions of the law, in private to disarm them by reasonings against the penalty;—this is a course which nothing can justify, and which tends to unsettle the foundations of theology and morality together.

In reference to Foster himself, the truth seems to be that his own mind was never really settled on this subject, but was swayed to and fro, and sometimes, perhaps, in dreadful agitation. In no other way can we account for the inconsistencies of his reasonings, and the contradiction between the menacing tenor of his writings in the prospect of the Eternal World, and the hesitating plunge into a complete denial of eternal retribution in his letter to a student in theology. But then, what a picture of vagueness and indetermination in theological opinion is presented in a man, whose practical writings are of so definite, compact and powerful a tissue, and whose personal solemn impressions of the eternal world make many of his pages look as if written in the light of the vast pyre of eternal burnings! We cannot but contrast what we have seen him saying in 1841, with his opinion and advice on the same subject in 1801. In that year he had occasion to write to the Rev. Dr. Ryland a criticism upon one of the Doctor's sermons, the subject of which was the eternal punishment of the wicked. It is said to have been a sermon in its delivery eminently powerful and successful, and Foster himself acknowledged in very strong terms the ingenuity, the variety, and the forcible description with which it abounded. But we can easily conceive that a sermon of this character which would be powerful and useful preached from the heart of a man glowing like Paul with love to the souls of his audience, might not be so well fitted for the press, without the tones and persuasions of the preacher. Mr.

Foster advised him to keep it without printing, and told him he was afraid that those who had expatiated most on infernal subjects had felt them the least. But he did not tell him, as he did forty years afterwards the student in theology, that if the tremendous doctrine were true, surely it ought to be almost continually proclaimed as with the blast of a trumpet, inculcated and reiterated, with ardent passion, in every possible form of terrible illustration. But he said that it struck him as a kind of *Christian cruelty* to go into such illustration, and he gave an opinion in regard to the voice of the New Testament on the subject, which for the sake of comparison and contrast we place beside his opinion on the same at a later period.

1801.

The utmost space I would allot in my writings to this part of the revelations of our religion, should not, at any rate, exceed the proportion which in the New Testament this part of truth bears to the whole of the sacred book, the grand predominant spirit of which is love and mercy.

1841.

I do say, that to make the milder suaves, the gentle language of love, the main resource, is not in consistency with the spirit of the Bible, in which the larger proportion of what is said of sinners, and addressed to them, is plainly in a tone of menace and alarm. Strange if it had been otherwise, when a righteous Governor was speaking to a depraved, rebellious race.

It would seem that Foster had not, on this subject, come to the Scriptures to settle his mind there, with the same unhesitating acquiescence and faith, with which he received from the same Scriptures the doctrine of a suffering Mediator. And it would seem that he had not looked very narrowly into the profound and fundamental connection of the great truths of the Gospel scheme with one another, and their mutual dependence on each other for their separate demonstration, sanction and power. He was not what can be called a profound theologian, neither in the Scriptures, nor in the systematic study of theology. He never pretended to be. Nor is this a derogation from the

greatness of his merit and the originality and power of his thoughts as a practical writer ; though we love to see the tide of practical thought and emotion sustained, compressed, and, so to speak, flung back upon itself, by a rock-bound coast of theoretical systematic truth, which offers points of command over the ocean, and strong harbors where the soul may securely ride at anchor. But Foster carried his mental independence, and his hatred of the restraint of systems, to the verge of error. He would have been a more useful preacher, a more massive thinker, a more comprehensive writer, had his mind, from an early period, been more deeply imbedded in the knowledge of the Scriptures. On whatever point a man's anchorage does not hold, there his reasoning is unsafe.

That Foster could have reasoned on the ground of mere prejudice and doubt, without taking into view known and admitted facts and relations, would have seemed incredible. And yet in the instance of the future retribution he has done it. He has adopted a line of reasoning with an admission in the course of it fatal to the very principle of the argument ; a line of reasoning taking up in its course a mighty fact to support it, which overthrows it completely from its very foundation. He brings in the agency of Satan, the intervention and activity of the great Tempter and Destroyer, to lessen our sense of the desert of endless punishment in man, and thus to make the truth of such punishment appear inconsistent with the Divine goodness ; not appearing to remember that the admission of the truth of the Scriptures in regard to the existence and agency of such a Tempter and Destroyer, is inevitably the admission of an eternal state of sin and suffering ; which is as inconsistent with the Divine benevolence in reference to Satan and the fallen angels, as it would be with reference to man. Eternal retribution being once admitted in reference to any created sinful intelligences, *must* be admitted in reference to all ; the disproportion between endless misery and any

limited duration of punishment being infinitely greater than any possible disproportion between the guilt of one class of finite sinful intelligences and another class. It could not possibly consist with the Divine benevolence, to punish one class of sinners eternally, and not another. Admitting, therefore, the sin and the punishment of Satan, you have overthrown the very foundation of any argument against the Divine benevolence, from the truth of eternal retribution as propounded in the Scriptures. This Mr. Foster has done; taking up thus into the texture of his argument. (which, indeed, is but a texture of doubts and reasonings from mere emotion) a fact that rots the whole of it, a single thread that turns it all to dust. It is as if a man should attempt to pass off as a costly *antique*, a vase that has on it the name of the manufacturer at Potsdam. It is like the attempt to prove that Moses was mistaken in the date of the world by a temple alleged to have been built before the deluge, but in which a hieroglyphical inscription being read, fixes the time of its erection under the Roman Empire. Bringing up Satan as the Tempter of man, to prop up an argument against Eternal Retribution as inconsistent with the benevolence of God, Mr. Foster has merely produced an instance of an intelligent, sinful being, *actually suffering such retribution*; an instance which inspiration itself lays hold of to prove the certainty of such retribution, in the case of wicked men. "For if God spared not the angels that sinned, but cast them down to hell, the Lord knoweth how to reserve the unjust unto the Day of Judgment, to be punished." We take the case of Satan as being, in Mr. Foster's argument, a case of eternal retribution; for we do not suppose that Mr. Foster would have admitted a possibility of Satan ever being converted, or as he would rather have phrased it, ever being brought under the economy of grace. The existence of an immortal being so malignant as to make the perdition of immortal beings his delight, is the exist-

ence of eternal sin and misery ; and that being given, the argument against the Divine goodness from eternal retribution, is as futile as would be an argument against the Divine existence from the alleged eternity of matter.

The great truth of the atonement was another admitted, practical, sun-like fact, which Foster held, most fully and firmly, but yet maintained an absolute insensibility to its bearing upon this point of an endless retribution. Either there was a voluntary absence and denial of any effort of his attention that way, an anxious withdrawal of his mind from that conclusion, almost as if he had said within himself, "That way madness lies;" or there was an original defectiveness in his reception of the doctrine, a sheer cutting away of the whole of one side of the atonement from his moral vision. His reasoning on one divine truth apart from its connection with and dependence on another, was as if a natural philosopher should reason on the motion of the tides, without taking into consideration the influence of the moon ; or should undertake to predict the moon's changes, without considering her position with respect to the sun.

There are three ways in which the Atonement may be disposed of to favor the doctrine of universal salvation. The first is the utter denial and rejection of it, as needless in the government of God, and in the economy of the human system. This summary mode is in favor with many.

The second expedient is to extend the virtue of the Atonement over the whole human race, irrespective of moral character, as also of the question whether the expedient of salvation offered to the race is accepted of by them. But a God who could save men without repentance, might as well have saved them without an atonement. This second expedient was not admitted by Mr. Foster, for he made eternal salvation dependent on the condition of repentance and faith.

The third plan is, that of saving some by the Atonement through faith, and leaving the rest to be saved by suffering the penalty of the Divine law, that penalty, as pretended, not being eternal. This seems to have been the view taken by Mr. Foster. On the least profound examination it is full of palpable absurdities. The idea of an atonement at all, if salvation could come in any other way, is absurd. The idea of an atonement for some, and purgatory for others, is absurd. The idea of an atonement because the Divine attributes required it, is rendered absurd by the supposition of the salvation of some without it. If any could be saved by punishment irrespective of an atonement, nay, having despised and rejected an atonement, why not all? The idea of the innocent suffering for the guilty is absurd, if the guilty can be saved by suffering for themselves. The idea of the innocent suffering for the guilty because God could not save them in any other way consistent with the honor of eternal justice, is made perfectly absurd the moment you suppose any to be saved through their own suffering. But such is the case with those who suffer the penalty of the divine law, if that penalty be not endless. They serve out their time, they sin, and suffer for it the appointed measure of suffering, and are restored. Suffering is their savior, irrespective of an atonement. They have nothing to do with Christ.

But the only ground on which divine revelation propounds the atonement by the innocent suffering for the guilty, is because it was not consistent with the divine attributes to pardon the guilty in any other way. "For myself," says Mr. Foster, "I never feel any difficulty in conceiving that while the Divine mercy would save guilty beings from deserved punishment, it should yet be absolutely necessary to the honor of eternal justice that an awful infliction should fall somewhere." But in Foster's plan it falls both upon the innocent and the guilty; for while he supposes those who trust in the sufferings of the innocent to be saved by

them, he also supposes those who do not trust in those sufferings, but despise them, to be saved by *their own*, saved by the endurance of the penalty of the law, which, they might say, we can well afford to endure, there being an eternity of blessedness afterwards. The idea of an atonement for part of the human race, and salvation for the rest by limited suffering, is well nigh the most absurd that ever was broached in all theological speculation. And yet this is absolutely Mr. Foster's idea, believing, as he seems to have endeavored to do, that all mankind will be saved after a limited endurance of the penalty.

A limited endurance of the penalty! Here we strike upon another remarkable inconsistency in Mr. Foster's mind and train of reasoning; remarkable for him, because it could not have been supposed that a severely disciplined mind would have admitted it. He institutes a moral argument from "the stupendous idea of eternity," and he goes the whole length of supposing that man's necessary ignorance and narrow faculty of apprehending it precludes him from having a competent notion of it, and so inevitably prevents the salutary force of an impression from the threat of an eternal retribution. But if incompetent to comprehend the idea of *unlimited* duration of punishment, then necessarily incompetent to apprehend any approximation to that idea, and consequently the smaller and more limited the nature of the threatened retribution, the more powerful its effect upon the mind. The power of the impression increases in an inverse ratio to the magnitude of the danger. This is a strict and inevitable result from Foster's reasoning. He endeavors to institute a series of approximations to the idea of eternal misery, and then showing that they all fail, he demands that man, if there is an eternal retribution for sin, "be apprized of the nature and measure of the penal consequence." He intimates that it is something "totally out of the scope of his faculties to apprehend," and therefore unfit to deter him.

But what is it about which Mr. Foster is reasoning, and on which, in its very definiteness and supremacy of horror, he founds his whole argument *against* the doctrine, as against the goodness of God? Why, it is the actual, overwhelming and intolerable dreadfulness of this very judgment, of eternal misery; a thing so overwhelming and intolerable, that the human soul starts back from it aghast. It is then, after all, a thing of which the human soul may form a very definite conception; and the consequence inevitably is that it is of all things the best adapted to deter the soul from sin. And if that soul can form such a conception of it as to reason *against* it, *because* it is so supremely horrible, it must, if once admitted on the authority of God, constitute a deterring impression against sin, of an energy that all the motives in the universe cannot equal.

Mr. Foster's reasoning oversets itself at every step; and if this be the material out of which the private conversations of unbelief in eternal retribution, of which he speaks as among certain ministers, were composed, we wonder at the occultation of reason which must, on this subject, have come over the intellectual circle. Nor can we conceive in what school of intellectual philosophy a circle of minds could have been disciplined, to reason so disastrously concerning those spiritual ideas, which are the birthright and possession of the soul in its very constitution. The idea of eternity is perhaps the simplest and most omnipresent of all our ideas; the easiest to be appealed to, the most universal and absolute; pervading the mind like an unconscious atmosphere, and brooding over it even more constitutionally than the idea of the immortality of the soul. Eternity is, indeed, a simple idea, one of the inevitable forms in which the human reason works, if it works at all. There is no possible approximation to it, or forming of it, by measures or degrees; the soul overleaps them all, and is beyond them; it is there in eternity, it was there before them. They may help to awaken the consciousness of the soul,

and quicken its sensibilities, but they cannot give the idea ; just as a galvanic machine may quicken a palsied nerve, but cannot impart or create life. It is in the soul, a law and development of its reason, or computations could no more impart it, than they could to the beasts that perish. Mr. Foster says, "all that is within human capacity is to imagine the vastest measures of *time*, and to look to the termination of these, as only touching the mere commencement of eternity." But the absolute falsity of this proposition in the philosophy of the human mind is quite demonstrable. It reminds us of a humorous and powerful exhibition of its absurdity by John Paul Richter.

Nor is the "feeble efficacy of the terrible doctrine itself as notionally admitted" owing to any incompetency in the mind to apprehend it ; for this would convey a dread imputation indeed against the goodness and justice of the Creator, in putting under an eternal moral accountability a race of creatures whom he had made absolutely incompetent to apprehend the idea of eternity ! And this is but one of the monstrous consequences, which would follow from Mr. Foster's argument ; the grossest fatuity, we had almost said, that ever a great intellect was betrayed into.

But the feebleness of that efficacy is owing to the voluntary moral insensibility of the soul to all spiritual ideas and apprehensions ; a consequence of its depravity and not of its constitution. And that depravity is such, that we apprehend present self-interest outweighs even the consideration of *eternal* consequences, unseen, and infinitely more so of any merely *limited* consequences. The habit of looking at and living for the things which are seen and temporal produces an utter insensibility to the things unseen and eternal ; so that, though the idea of eternity is full, clear, and simple in the intellect, it is not admitted into the heart ; there is a disconnection between it, and the practical affections, as between the brain and the nerves in the case of some forms of paralysis. But still the idea

rules as a monarch in the intellect, and exerts in *its* turn a paralyzing power over all motives, all forms of inducement, addressed to the soul as based upon anything *less* than eternity. The idea of eternity in the soul reduces to ashes, as an omnipotent magician, whatever accumulations, either of horrors or beatitudes, may be attempted before it in any duration short of eternity. Such tricks of accumulation, though the forces of the planetary universe were called in aid of the computation, as Foster has done, are as a hollow jugglery, which the soul sees through in an instant, and darts beyond, infinitely out of the reach of all limited efficacy. So that it may with truth be said that a being to whom God has given the idea of eternity, is absolutely beyond the reach of efficacy even by omnipotence, with anything less *than* eternity. A mind with all the intense energy of thought and language, and all the power of imagery, that not only Foster, but an archangel could command, might exhaust itself in piling horrors upon horrors, with all forms of illustration supplied by the universe, and all exclamations of dread before the misery of incomputable ages of torment; but the soul, darting into the eternity beyond, exulting spreads its wings in triumph; and laughs at the scarecrows of a limited duration. A depraved man, assured of an eternity of blessedness, will be affected by nothing *less* than an eternity of misery. It is absolutely in this way that the power of this idea of eternity is most thoroughly tested among mortals, by its rendering *inefficacious* all ideas but those drawn *from* eternity, and on the other hand, the power of human depravity is tested and demonstrated in this, more than anything else—its power to render the inducements of eternity itself absolutely inefficacious unless wielded by the Almighty.

There is in one of Mr. Foster's valuable articles on Chalmer's Astronomical Discourses a most impressive argument as to the necessity of an eternal and infinite demonstration of the Divine Omnipotence and Wisdom, by a

practical boundlessness in the created universe ; the mighty tracts of creation sweeping endlessly along, and merging into an awful and mysterious infinity. The greatest of created beings will never to all eternity be able to survey the whole of the material creation. "For must it not be one great object in the Creator's design, that this magnitude should make a sublime and awful impression on his intelligent creatures? But if the magnitude is to make this impression, what would be the impression made on created spirits by their coming to the end, the boundary, of this magnitude? It is palpable that this latter impression must counteract the former. So that if the stupendous extension of the works of God was intended and adapted to promote, in the contemplations of the highest intelligences, an infinitely glorious, though still incompetent conception of the Divine infinity, the ascertaining of the limit, the distinct perception of the finiteness, of that manifestation of power, would tend with a dreadful force to repress and annihilate that conception ; and it may well be imagined that if an exalted adoring spirit could ever in eternity find itself at that limit, the perception would inflict inconceivable horror." Each of the elements of the manifestation of an Infinite Being, therefore, Mr. Foster argues, will have a practical infiniteness relative to the capacities of his intelligent creatures ; and the universe itself must be one, of which it shall not be within the *possibilities* of any intelligence less than the infinite to know the termination.

Now this is truly important and powerful as to the true nature of our idea of eternity, and the worthlessness of any impression as a motive on the soul of an immortal being, which does not coincide in its extent with its own and the Divine existence. If this reasoning holds good in regard to God's Omnipotence, much more in regard to his moral perfections. If the utmost conception of creative vastness and glory possible to a created mind, would be reduced to

an overwhelming impression of littleness on coming to the absolute limit of its display in the bosom of eternity, how much more in regard to any and every manifestation of God's moral attributes.

If an adequate impression of the Divine perfection of omnipotence be required to be produced, Foster's reasoning shows that anything absolutely short of eternity is nothing; nay, is of a force the contrary way. And so, if an adequate impression of the Divine holiness is requisite in the sanctions of the Divine law, anything short of eternity in that is equally of force the contrary way. If an adequate impression of terror for sinful beings under a respite of mercy on certain conditions be required, an adequate deterring impression by the penalty of the law, Foster's own reasoning shows that anything short of eternity would fail. The eternal and infinite dreadfulness of disobedience could not be shown by anything less than eternal suffering on account of disobedience; the eternal and infinite dreadfulness and terribleness of sin, if required to be manifested in extent, would sink into an impression of nothingness, when the absolute limit of the evil should be reached.

And the experiment having once been tried, we can assume with certainty that the universe of created intelligences would feel released from all fear of God as to any consequences of rebellion against him. The penalty would be the scorn of all evil beings, and no object, either of solicitude, of confidence, or of reverence, to good beings. The arrival at the end of it would inflict inconceivable horror on those spirits who have looked to it as the manifestation of the Divine holiness and justice, and the protection of themselves, and of the interests of the universe against the encroachments of sin, and would fill with inconceivable exultation and delight those spirits, who, in spite of its threatenings, have dared to rebel. And we can conceive of a period in duration, from which all that has been passed through of suffering, though in a circle of ages beyond the possibility

of human computation, would be looked upon as less than the remembrance, by a man on the verge of three score years and ten, of the sting of a wasp, or the minutest emotion of sorrow in his childhood.

But if the creation of the universe be assumed as undertaken for the display of the Divine perfections, the government of that universe by rewards and punishments must be so assumed, much more. And consequently, on Foster's own reasoning, the extent of such display in each of these directions, in each of the elements of the manifestation of an Infinite Being, must have a practical infiniteness, relative to the capacities of his intelligent creatures; and the demonstration of the terribleness of sin, and of God's holiness and justice in the punishment of sin, must be one, of which it shall not be within the *possibilities* of any intelligence less than the Infinite to know the termination. We wonder that this necessary consequence of Foster's argument should not have occurred to his own mind, when pressed with doubt and difficulty in the doctrine of eternal punishment.

Some of the questions respecting our state in the future world, which Foster was ever proposing to his own mind, are comparatively trifling, though invested with a solemn curiosity of spirit that communicates its own mysterious shade to every article of inquiry; reminding us of the illustration, which Coleridge has somewhere used, that the colors of the chameleon darken in the shadow of him who bends over to look at it. So the mind of Mr. Foster sees in the eternal world a reflection of his own dim imaginings, instead of the realities which a man may and must see, if he looks through the telescope of God's Word, and not the smoky glass of his own fancies. Mr. Foster's letter to Rev. Mr. Clowes, the 213th in the biographical collection, written in the 70th year of his life, in regard to the intermediate state, is an interesting exhibition of the posture of his spirit. He sets out with "assuming in entire confidence the soul's consciousness after death; this is implied in many passages

of Scripture ; but a number of them, often cited, assert it in so plain a manner, that nothing but the most resolute perversity of criticism can attempt to invalidate them."

And could Mr. Foster have admitted anything *less* than this, concerning the number and vast variety of passages which teach so clearly the doctrine of an eternal retribution ? On some of those passages the very truth of the soul's consciousness after death hinges. Why did not Mr. Foster apply his canon of judgment to the consideration of eternal retribution, asserted in those passages in so plain a manner that nothing but the most resolute perversity of criticism can attempt to invalidate them ?

But he goes on in this interesting letter, to present a variety of questions, which he would put to a messenger from the unseen world, could he have such an one to converse with, and intimates his opinion that we are, by some *punitive* dispensation, "denied such a knowledge of the invisible world, as would have tended to make the prospect of that world more influentially impressive."

In view of such a singular position as this, we cannot but bring a previous state of Mr. Foster's own mind in contrast with it. There is a most striking passage in his introduction to Doddridge's *Rise and Progress*, in which he dwells upon the mighty assemblage of considerations, that should irresistibly compel a careless soul to thoughtfulness, but to which it is insensible. "The very emanations of heaven, radiating downwards to where you dwell, are intercepted and do not reach you. It is the frequent reflection of a thoughtful mind in observing you,—what ideas, what truths, what mighty appeals, belong to the condition of this one man and of that, devoted and enslaved to the world ? Oh ! why is it impossible to bring them into application ? A few minutes of time would be sufficient for the annunciation of what, if it could be received by them in its simple, unexaggerated importance, would stop that one man's gay career, as if a great serpent had raised its head in his path ;

would confound that other's calculation for emolument ; would bring a sudden dark eclipse on that third man's visions of fame ; would tear them all from their inveterate and almost desperate combination with what is to perish, and amidst their surprise and terror would excite an emotion of joy that they had been dissevered before it was too late, from an object that was carrying them down a rapid declination towards destruction. *And the chief of these things, so potent if applied, are not withheld as if secreted and silent in some dark cloud, from which we had to invoke them to break forth in lightning ; they are actually exhibited in the Divine revelation."*

There are, then, things enough revealed from that invisible world, emanations from Heaven radiating downwards, alarming ideas and mighty appeals enough, if men would look at them, to render the prospect of that world so influentially impressive, that if a bolt of thunder had fallen, or the ground had opened at his feet, or a great serpent had reared its head in his path, it would not tend more certainly to arrest our steps, to tear us from our desperate combination with what is to perish. And these things are not withheld, secreted, or silent in a dark cloud, but they actually break forth in lightning from the Divine revelation ! This is the impression of a mind beholding these things itself, and endeavoring to take hold of them, to turn them, as by an infallible and potent conductor of the lightning, upon the insensible minds of others. Mr. Foster, in this state of open spiritual vision, sees through the Word of God these "mighty truths, requisitions, overtures, promises, portents, menaces, close to the sinner, suspended just over him, of a nature to demolish the present state of his mind, if brought in contact with it," and the insensibility of the man amidst all this, is with him a matter of "indignant speculation," and he is "excited to a benevolent impatience, a restless wish, that things so near and important to the man should take hold upon him." He wishes that an

austere apparition, as from the dead, might accost him, who is living as if life were never to have an end!

This is the mood of mind, this the state of vision, this the anxiety of heart, in a man endeavoring to urge upon others the importance of religion. But how different the speculative letter of the same being at seventy years of age. He wishes for something from the invisible world, more influentially impressive! He begs for a few of the special facts of that world, "that might keep our minds directed under a graver impression, to a preparation for it." And with the declaration of our Saviour directly before his mind,—neither would they believe, though one rose from the dead,—he endeavors to diminish the amount of the meaning of that declaration, to what is barely and absolutely *necessary* to understand by it. A state of mind so singularly obstinate against any but compulsory conviction, assuredly comes near to that very disease of unbelief, of which our Saviour speaks. What revelation *could* be made to satisfy it? Here again is Thomas among the disciples. Believe on *such* evidence? Show me the print of the nails, and let me thrust my hand into his side!

Mr. Foster goes on. . . "We must submit to feel that we *are* in the dark. . . . A contemplative spirit hovers with insuppressible inquisitiveness about the dark frontier, beyond which it *knows* that wonderful realities are existing—realities of greater importance to it than the whole world on this side of that limit. We watch for some glimpse through any part of the solemn shade." Would not one imagine that he were in the presence of some highly-cultivated and powerful pagan mind, without a revelation, soliloquizing on the unimaginable future, as a dark, unfathomed, palpable obscure, rather than listening to the speculations of the greatest minds in the world, under the full light of the Christian dispensation! This is one of the most remarkable examples on record of that perversity of mind, which suffers its ignorance and impatience about that which is

unknown, to diminish its confidence, and obscure its perceptions, in regard to that which is known.

Now, in regard to the detail of Divine revelation, there can be no doubt that both the amount of light given and that withheld, the subjects made to stand out in clearest day, and those held back in comparative obscurity, the degree, the distribution, the direction of that light, and the combination of light and shade, are exactly what is required for a perfect revelation to mortals in our state. To give the realities of the future world their full power over our minds in this world, there must be that sublime and awful mingling of the definite with the indefinite, which presents absolute truth, but truth which carries us wandering through eternity; there must be that absence of all such exactness, as would make the inquisitive speculator say, Now I have it all under my command and comprehension. Had the revelation been occupied with answers to such inquiries as Mr. Foster demanded, its power over the soul would have been immeasurably lessened. It is the solemn reserve of the Scriptures in regard to such comparatively unimportant questions and particulars, and their solemn and awful fulness and clearness as to great fundamental truths, that constitutes one of the greatest incidental proofs of their Divine inspiration; their fulness on all points essential to the soul's eternal interests; their reserve on all points of mere intellectual and speculative inquisitiveness; on all points on which *men* would have resorted to fulness and minuteness in *their* communications, on purpose to excite and attract the curiosity and admiration of mankind. Revelation would have greatly lost its power to keep the mind directed under a grave impression of preparation for the eternal world, if it *had* been constructed and arranged according to Mr. Foster's demands.

And the nature of Mr. Foster's own unsophisticated, almost unconscious impressions, and the amazing power with which he could convey them, in regard to what awaits

the soul in eternity, may be much better learned from his practical writings, than his impatient speculative questionings. Take, for example, his incidental passage in regard to the death of Hume. After examining the manner of the philosopher in meeting death, the low and labored jokes, the suspicious buffoonery, by which his companions could be so much diverted, but which looked much like "the expedient of a boy on passing through some gloomy place in the night, who whistles to lessen his fear, or to persuade his companion that he does not feel it;" he observes that "to a man who solemnly believes the truth of revelation, *and therefore the threatenings of Divine vengeance against the despisers of it*, this scene will present as mournful a spectacle, as perhaps the sun ever shone upon. We here behold a man of great talents and invincible perseverance, entering on his career with the profession of an impartial inquiry after truth, met at every stage and step by the evidences and expostulations of religion and the claims of his Creator, but devoting his labors to the pursuit of fame and the promotion of impiety, at length acquiring and accomplishing, as he declared himself, all he had intended and desired, and descending towards the close of life amidst tranquillity, widely extending reputation, and the homage of the great and the learned. We behold him appointed soon to appear before the Judge, to whom he had never alluded but with malice or contempt; yet preserving to appearance an entire self-complacency, idly jesting about his approaching dissolution, and mingling with the insane sport his references to the fall of superstition, a term of which the meaning is hardly even dubious when expressed by such men. *We behold him at last carried off, and we seem to hear, the following moment, from the darkness in which he vanishes, the shriek of surprise and terror, and the overpowering accents of the messenger of vengeance. On the whole globe there probably was not acting at the time, as mournful a tragedy as that of which the friends*

of Hume were the spectators, without being aware that it was any tragedy at all."

Now we need not say that the sentences in this impressive paragraph marked in italics convey a more solemn and effective impression by far, than if their place had been supplied by anything more definite. The soul broods over the awful undefined imagery covered up in darkness, yet half disclosed in light, behind which the great fact of sudden and terrific vengeance rushes with overwhelming certainty.

We have spoken of the morbid passion for doubts, or rather, we ought to say, the fascination by them, and irresistible drawing towards them, as a bird to the glitter of the serpent's eye, beneath which the great mind of Foster seemed sometimes wrestling. His was not the *depravity* of unbelief, but the *temptation*. "If thou be the Son of God, command these stones that they be made bread." Some men feed upon doubts, and search for them, and make sale of them. And some men pretend to sport with them even on the brink of the grave; "a low vivacity," said Foster, in the case of Hume, "which seems but like the quickening corruption of a mind, whose faculty for perception is putrefying and dissolving even before the body."

But Foster did not seek for doubts; they were borne in upon him; they were a source of anguish to him. A man who loves them is likely to perish by them. We have heard of men, in search of mud-turtles, held by the viscous soil till the tide flowed over them, and they were drowned; or of men digging mud itself in their boat, and sinking with it; some *minds* are swamped in the same manner.

There are subjects on which it is impossible *not* to doubt; and the plainest truths of revelation may be driven to extremes beyond the limit of human faculties. The attributes of God, and the elements of our own being may be tortured with questions, that admit of no other answer

than an *unquestioning* acquiescence in the Divine Wisdom. On some of these questions, if created minds were left to themselves in controversy, it would be eternal. The one party might invent arguments that would seem in their explosion to level all the ranks of the justifiers of the ways of God to man, like Satan's new artillery against the serried files of angels. But they again might be overwhelmed with arguments like the seated hills, and together so the war would be eternal. There is nothing but the coming of Messiah himself that can calm the soul, and stay the surges of its chaos.

We cannot help attributing most of the defects and difficulties in Mr. Foster's theological views to the low position he was content to keep through life in regard to personal experience in the great things of religion. He had but little animating faith in the power of religion, because he looked at it and experienced it more through the medium of human imperfections, cares, anxieties, troubles, distractions, than of Divine grace. He did not look into the perfect law of liberty, nor hold up to his own view, and the view of others, the examples in the New Testament. To use one of his own illustrations, applied in conversation to another subject, his piety did not rise high enough to keep the sharp and rugged prominences of truth, which reason cannot scale with safety, beneath the surface; because his own experience was not deeper, they rose, or were suffered to rise, into occasions of mischief and difficulty. Had the powerful spring-tide of piety as well as mind overflowed his being, there would have been no breakers in the sea. Had Foster's mind been lifted, for example, to a post of observation like that of Edwards, when he wrote the history of Human Redemption, what a very different view he would have taken of the economy of human existence with its lurid shades. He has such a post now, we doubt not, amidst the "sanctities of heaven."

The truth of eternal retribution is a citadel defended

by many batteries. So fast as to the vision of an enemy one seems to be demolished, another rises. In the Scriptures, in human reason, from analogy, from the nature of things, from the character of God, from the character of man, the evidence is solemn and overwhelming. You may play your game of escape, if the laws of evidence be disregarded, but with one who holds you to logical conclusions, in every possible move you are check-mated. You cannot put the various doctrines of the Bible in any relative array but they lead to this; you cannot exclude this from any possible combination. And any one of the elements of the Scriptural problem given, may lead you through the whole circle of Truth. Given, the atonement; to find the character of man, and its relation to the element of retribution;—that would do it. Or, given, the character of man and the character of God; to find the element of retribution; that would do it. Or, given, the necessity of Divine grace to fit the soul for heaven, the atonement being the sole condition of that grace; to find the element of retribution; that would do it. Or, given, the existence and agency of fallen spirits to find *man's* retribution; that would do it. Or, given, the bare offer of eternal life; *that* would do it. Or, given, the benevolence of God, the axiom of the universe, GOD IS LOVE; that would do it. For all retribution is invested with the atmosphere of love, and had not God been Love, he might have let the guilty go unpunished. But Justice only does the work of love, and Love works by Justice for the purity and blessedness of the universe. Where there is sin, love without wrath, without retribution, would only be connivance with iniquity. There is no such thing as love without justice, or justice without penalty, or penalty without execution, or execution *with* end, so long as there is sin.

Even in our natural theology, sin being given, pain is absolutely necessary in order to prove the benevolence of God. So that the problem and the answer might be stated thus :

Given, the fact of sin, how will you demonstrate that God is a good being? Answer: Only by proving that God punishes sin. In this view, the actual degree of misery with which earth is filled, so far from being a difficulty in God's government, goes to establish it as God's. A malevolent being would have let men sin, without making them miserable; therefore, God could not be proved benevolent, unless, in a world of sin, there were the ingredient of misery.

But the arrangement in this world is imperfect, even to a pagan mind, and leaves the system open to doubt as to God's justice, because sin is so often without punishment, and the wicked escape. But if they escape here only to meet a perfect retribution hereafter, the doubt is removed. Here, then, in this world, we see only the seeds, the roots, the imperfect development of a system, which has its perfection in the eternal world. Such is the inevitable argument from our natural theology. A mind like Bishop Butler's, not withheld, as Foster's was, by permitted doubts as to the Divine goodness, from pressing the argument to its logical conclusion, finds in the eternal world the completion of the system, which is but begun in this. Then there comes in revelation, to bring the prophecy of our natural theology to an absolute certainty, detailing beforehand the perfect provisions of the Divine government, and showing that the *partial* flashes of justice in this world are but the *restraint* of the Divine indignation, under a system of mercy through the death of the Son of God; so that while there are *intimations enough* of retributive justice to warn men of what is to come, if they do not avail themselves of that mercy; there is *restraint* enough of retributive justice to constitute a perfect probation, and leave unembarrassed the entire free agency of man. There is retribution enough to show that God can and will punish sin; retribution so little, as to show that what he does not do here, he will do hereafter.

In such a system, the very provisions of mercy are manifestly an overwhelming proof that there can be mercy in no other way. The provisions of mercy, if rejected, return into sanctions of the law, and are the greatest assurances of an endless retribution. Just thus is the argument conducted in the Scriptures. And it must be a most singular perversity of mind, that, accepting humbly of those provisions for itself, as the only possible way of salvation, at the same time condemns the goodness of God in not saving without those provisions, the persons who reject them. It is turning the whole foundations of argument upside down, and putting things in the very reverse order from that which they occupy in the Scriptures. It is this reverse order which Mr. Foster takes. Given, justification by faith alone; to save that part of the world which continues rebellious, *without* faith. Or, in other words, given, the atonement for believers; to save unbelievers in spite of it.

There is no shadow of such a problem presented for solution in the Word of God. The question is not even mooted of the *possibility* of such salvation. If there be any form of question about it, it is presented in such a shape, as to constitute a new and more impregnable variety in the argument of retribution; not, how can they be *saved*? but, how can they *escape*, who *neglect* so great salvation? Given by God's mercy, the atonement; what must become of those who reject it? That is the solemn path, into which our inquisitive thoughts are turned in the Scripture.

There is a marked contradiction between Mr. Foster's line of reasoning on this subject, and his practical solemnity and power in the enforcement of repentance. Take, for example, those admirable letters written to assist a soul on the verge of the eternal world in its preparation for the change from this world to that. He never glances at a possibility of there being safety in the eternal world, with-

out a previous reliance upon Christ in this. His whole argument, in all the solemnity which Foster, of all men, possessed a surpassing ability to throw around it, so that it seems as a dark cloud coming to brood over the spirit with mutterings of thunder, is constructed here and elsewhere on the impossibility of blessedness in heaven without regeneration by Divine grace; the impossibility of that grace, except on a personal application to, and reliance upon, the Divine Mediator; the impossibility of guilt being taken away but by relying wholly on the Saviour of the world; the impossibility of pardon, without seeking pardon through his blood. To all this he adds the inveteracy and profoundness of human depravity, the utterly perverted state of every heart. "It is *here*," says he, speaking to a dear and most amiable young friend, "that we need pardoning mercy to remove the guilt, and the operations of the Divine Spirit to transform our nature and reverse its tendencies. It is thus *alone* that we can be made fit for the community and felicity of heaven." And to all this he is wont to add the emphatic pressure of the danger of delay, lest the opportunity be passed by, and the immortal spirit be "driven away in its wickedness," unprepared to meet its Judge.

What is there behind all this? What does it indicate? A deep, unfathomable conviction of the danger of eternal retribution, a conviction which sinks Foster's sentences into the conscience as with the pen of a diamond; a conviction which goes beforehand with the reader, and prepares the mind to receive the impression from Foster's solemnity of appeal, stamped as with the weight of a mountain. The conviction in Foster's mind was indeed habitually wrestling with doubt; but whenever he addressed himself to the work of warning an immortal being, the instinctive energy of the conviction, quickened by anxiety for another, seemed to thrust the doubt down, and the tide of solemn thought pressed unimpeded onward. Such declarations of Foster's belief as this, that it is only by the Scriptural view of the

Mediator that "all our guilt can be removed from the soul, *and dissevered from its destiny in the life to come,*" indicate a reef of thought on this subject, over which the anxieties of his mind were thundering incessantly. The student in theology, or young minister to whom he addressed a letter so palpably inconsistent with the practical tenor of his writings, might have answered him with the question, What mean the breakers on that reef? What *is* that destiny in the life to come, from which *guilt cannot be dissevered*?

And he may be answered now, in Foster's own language, taken from his earlier work on the Importance of Religion, with a positive answer in the shape of a returning question: "The question comes to you, whether you can deliberately judge it better to carry forward a corrupt nature, uncorrected, untransformed, unreclaimed to God, into the future state, WHERE IT MUST BE MISERABLE, than to undergo whatever severity is indispensable in the process of true religion, which would prepare you for a happy eternity. Reflect that you are every day practically answering the question. Can it be that you are answering it in the affirmative? Do I really see before me the rational being who in effect avows:—I cannot, will not, submit to such a discipline, though in refusing it and resisting it, I renounce an infinite and eternal good, and *consign myself to PERDITION*?"

He may be answered with another sentence, taken from the same powerful work of Mr. Foster, and applied by Foster himself, as the *final* answer to those who question the truth of that "appalling estimate of future ruin," presented by the evangelical religious doctrine:—an answer which the writer himself would have done well to put up in characters of fire over his own entrance to the consideration of the subject:—"We have only to reply, that, as he has not yet seen the world of retribution, HE IS TO TAKE HIS ESTIMATE OF ITS AWARDS FROM THE DECLARATION OF HIM, WHO KNOWS

WHAT THEY ARE, AND THAT IT IS AT HIS PERIL HE ASSUMES TO ENTERTAIN ANY OTHER."

Here we rest. This single sentence contains a wisdom that quite sets aside Mr. Foster's whole letter on the subject of Divine Penalty. God only knows the retributions of eternity, and it is at our peril that we assume to entertain any other estimate of them, than that which his words distinctly reveal.

We cannot better close our notices of this subject, and of these intensely interesting volumes, than by quoting two of the remarks in Mr. Foster's Journal, numbered 321 and 323.

"We are, as to the grand system and series of God's government, like a man who, confined in a dark room, should observe through a chink in the wall, some large animal pacing by:—he sees but an extremely small strip of the animal at once as it passes by, and is utterly unable to form an idea of the size, proportions, or shape of it."

"How dangerous to defer those momentous reformatations which conscience is solemnly preaching to the heart. If they are neglected, the difficulty and indisposition are increasing every month. The mind is receding, degree after degree, from the warm and hopeful zone, till at last it will enter the arctic circle, and become fixed in relentless and eternal ice."

Out of the first three hundred articles in this Journal, prepared with great care by Mr. Foster's own hand, only twenty-eight have been published; of the others, likewise, many are omitted. We cannot conceive the reason for this procedure. It would seem proper to have published the whole of the Journal; it will be strange indeed, if it be not demanded by the earnest desire to know all that *can* be known of the mental and spiritual processes of so remarkable a mind. Appended to these volumes are some deeply interesting notices of Mr. Foster, as a preacher and companion, by John Sheppard, author of *Thoughts on Devotion*, and other productions.

We have spoken of that delightful trait in Mr. Foster's noble nature,—his childlike ingenuousness. There was in him a striking combination of simplicity of purpose, inde-

pendence, originality, and fearlessness of human opinion. Now if he had possessed, along with these qualities, a greater degree of wisdom in practical judgment, we believe we should have seen in the memorials of his biography more of positive faith, and less of the workings of anxious disquieting, and sometimes agonizing doubt. There are seasons of doubt and darkness in Christian experience, which man should keep from man, and carry only to God. He should keep them, not because he fears the tribunal of human opinion, but fears to add what may be the wrongfulness of his own state of mind to the sum of error and unbelief in the world. He should cease from man, and wait patiently upon God for light, because he loves his fellow beings, and is unwilling by his own uncertainties, which may spring from he knows not how many evil influences, to run the hazard of balancing their uncertainty on the wrong side. It is no part of a childlike ingenuousness to give utterance always to whatever may perplex the soul in its conflicts with the powers of darkness.

The admirable constitution of the mind of Robert Hall in reference to this subject has been developed by Mr. Foster himself in his own original and forcible style. In that part of his remarks on Mr. Hall's character as a preacher, he has alluded to the peculiar tendency in some minds to brood over the shaded frontier of awful darkness on the borders of our field of knowledge. "There are certain mysterious phenomena," says he, "in the moral economy of our world, which compel, and will not release, the attention of a thoughtful mind, especially if of a gloomy constitutional tendency. Wherever it turns, it still encounters their portentous aspect; often feels arrested and fixed by them as under some potent spell; making an effort, still renewed, and still unavailing, to escape from the appalling presence of the vision." Mr. Foster is here evidently disclosing something of the habit of his own experience. He was longing to have the oppression upon his mind alleviated;

and he thought that the strenuous deliberate exertion of a power of thought like Mr. Hall's, after he had been so deeply conversant with important and difficult speculations, might perhaps have contributed something towards such an alleviation. But even Mr. Hall could have effected nothing of this nature for a mind which would not exercise a childlike faith. Carry our knowledge up to the last point to which the strongest mind ever created could advance it, and there is still the same need of faith,—contented, quiet, submissive faith. And how is faith ever to be tried, how can it be proved that it is the faith of an humble and submissive mind, except in the midst, or on the border of great difficulties?

Mr. Foster speaks, almost with a feeling of disappointment, of that peculiarity in Mr. Hall's mental character, by which he appeared "disinclined to pursue any inquiries beyond the point where substantial evidence fails. He seemed content to let it remain a terra incognita, till the hour that puts an end to conjecture." We confess we see a deep wisdom and beauty in this trait of character. It was wrought into Mr. Hall's constitution not by nature only, but by the power of grace divine. And the more the soul is absorbed with the known realities of our being, and the overwhelming importance of what is clearly revealed of our destiny in the world to come, the more anxious it will be to *press that knowledge*, the more unwilling to distract the attention from it by the pursuit of doubt and inquisitive speculation, and the more content to leave the obscure and the mysterious to the hour when we shall see as we are seen, and know as we are known. "My efforts," said Mr. Foster, in his journal, "to enter into possession of the vast world of moral and metaphysical truth, are like those of a mouse attempting to gnaw through the door of a granary." It was also a curious remark which he made, that "one object of life should be to accumulate a great number of grand questions to be asked and resolved in eternity." In-

quisitive wonderer in the presence of mysterious and incomprehensible truth! Art thou *now* in a world, where faith is no longer needed? Or do the answers that in the light of eternity, the light of Heaven, have burst upon thy redeemed spirit, only render necessary a still higher faith, and prepare thee for its undoubting, beatific, everlasting exercise?

THE RELIGION OF EXPERIENCE,

AND THAT OF IMITATION.*

WE have happened upon an age, in which there is a great resurrection and life of old, dead, exploded errors. These errors, in this new life, are beginning to stalk about so proud and populous, that in some quarters truth retires and is hidden, or is even stricken down in the streets and churches. Error puts on the semblance of truth, and religion itself, in a form of mere earthly aggrandizement, becomes one enormous, despotic, consolidated lie.

The difference between the religion of experience and that of imitation, is a theme which at this crisis is occupying many minds;—nor is this wonderful, for it is all the difference between a missionary piety, and a piety of pride, intolerance, and self-indulgence. In the introduction of our subject, we shall, in few words, designate the two.

The world is to be saved, if saved at all, by the religion of Experience, and not that of Imitation. The religion of imitation is that of forms; the religion of experience is that of realities. The religion of imitation is *Churchianity*; the religion of experience is *Christianity*. The religion of imitation, except when it oppresses, is that of profound quiet and weakness; the religion of experience is that of conflict and power.

* An Address delivered before the Society of Inquiry on Missions, in Amherst College, August, 1843.

Imitation will do for calm times, and gorgeous forms and rites, and magnificent cathedrals; but experience is needed in the midst of danger, in dens and caves of the earth, or to support the bare simplicity of the gospel. Imitation may be a persecuting religion, experience alone can be a suffering one. Imitation goes to books, schools, forms, names, institutes; experience to God. Imitation takes Anselm, Bernard, Calvin, Edwards, Brainard, Emmons, anything, everything, but God's word. Experience goes to the living truth, and drinks into it. Imitation has the semblance of experience, but not its essence or its power. Imitation takes at second-hand what experience originates. Imitation studies systems, and reads the Bible to prove them. Experience studies the Bible, and reads human systems for illustration. Imitation is not a missionary spirit; experience is. Imitation may fill the world with the forms of piety, and with most of its refining influences. You may bring men away, in great measure, from their vices, and you may refine their manners, and yet bring them no nearer to Christ. And here I am constrained to remark, that one of our greatest dangers in the missionary enterprise lies in the fact, that so much, in reality, may be done without the religion of experience, the co-operation of the Holy Spirit. The world might be filled with a nominal Christianity, yea, an evangelical Christianity, and the Spirit of God have very little to do with it. There might be all the ameliorating influences of Christianity, except that of real conversion, following in the train of our efforts in every part of the world, and even the instrumentality of a prayerless church might be sufficient for such an evangelization. The dome of some gorgeous and heartless establishment, with all its decency and refinement, might be let down to cover every form of idolatry and heathenism, and to bring all tribes and communities of the gentile world in obedience to its rubrics and beneath its power. But what then would be gained? Why, this spiritual quack-

ery on a vast scale, this healing of the world's hurts slightly, would only put off to a more distant period the real prevalence of Christ's kingdom, and render a thousand times more difficult the real redemption of mankind from sin.

Now, it is to be feared that the religious characteristic of this age, compared with some other ages, is that of imitation rather than experience. This, in some respects, is the natural course of things. It is so, intellectually. An age of eminently original genius is ordinarily succeeded by an imitative age; or, if not imitative, the contrast between the splendor of genius, and the poverty of mere talent, makes it appear such. For example, the Elizabethian age in England, the age of Shakspeare, Milton, and Bacon, was an age of originality and power; the age of Queen Anne afterwards was an age of comparative imitation and weakness. These two ages, or something near them, may also be taken as corresponding examples of the religion of experience and that of imitation. The presence and agency of God's Spirit, and the power of God's Word, marked the one; that of human morality, speculation, and understanding, the other. Bunyan and Baxter, and we may add Leighton, may stand to personify the one; Tillotson and Locke may be the interpreters of the other. The seventeenth century, both in literature and religion, may, in a general comparison with our century, be said to stand in the contrast of an age of experience with an age of imitation.

For this inferiority of one age to another, there may be natural inevitable causes in respect to the development of mind and genius, but in religious things we are sure it ought not to be so. An age of religious imitation marks a period of departure from God; this is undeniable. An age cannot be destitute of deep and original religious experience, if it enjoy the word of God, and the ordinances of religion, without a great falling off from duty, and a great

betrayal of its own interests. Yet it is to be feared, all things taken together, that the religion of this age is a religion of imitation rather than experience ; a religion, the character of which, on the whole, is superficiality rather than profound originality and power. Into this prevailing habitude every individual new-comer is baptized ; every religionist grows up in this atmosphere ; forms his habits, active and passive, meditative and operative, inward and external, beneath it. The form of piety in the New Testament is not the object of general vision, but the form of piety in the Church ; and through this medium the characteristics of the gospel are seen as through an obscuring haze, and not in their own clear, definite, celestial shape. It is as if we should contemplate the heavens, and study astronomy, in the reflection thrown into the bosom of a mountain lake. Indeed, if the lake be clear and pellucid, seen in a still night, you may read the heavens therein ; but if the wind ruffle its surface ever so little, or if any impurity obscure the crystal clearness of its waters, you can never have the image of truth. The stars will seem double and dim, the planets will twinkle and lose their lustre, and you would not give much for the best astronomical system that ages of investigation could produce from such a study. So we contemplate the forms of religion, not in their native brightness, but in the obscurity of men's lives, in a dim, turbid reflection, in the troubled waters of a worldly piety. And this is just the error against which the Apostle warns us by the example of those, who, "measuring themselves by themselves, and comparing themselves among themselves, are not wise." However pure may be the medium, if we have come into the habit of looking at the piety of the gospel through it, or rather at the reflection of the gospel in it, we soon lose the sense of its native power and glory.

Now all this produces a puny, sickly, stunted, dwarf-like, superstitious piety, instead of the free, noble, healthful,

manly growth of the Scriptures. Instead of a piety that mounts up on wings as eagles, those wings are clipped, and the bird that should have soared even above the lightnings of the tempest into the pure empyrean, beats and soils its plumes against the bars of its prison. We know not if this age will ever awake to a sense of its departure from God, and of the degraded and imprisoned state of its piety; but we are perfectly sure that this soiled, craven, doubting, plodding, care-worn, self-seeking form, in which religion goes about in our churches, is not the open, noble, trusting, singing, independent, angelic, self-forgetting creature of the Scriptures. "These things," said our blessed Saviour to his disciples, "have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full." We stand in amazement before the open door of heaven revealed in these words by the Saviour to his people. There is a glory and a power, a beauty and a depth of blessedness in them, that we never see realized. And yet this is but one description of the piety of the New Testament; this is the angelic form of that religion which the Apostles believed was to fill the world. This experience of Christ's own joy is the legitimate product of Christ's own word in its native power and glory. And truly, if all believers possessed this experience, and lived by it and upon it, the radiancy of such piety *would* fill the world. This, we say, is the power of God's word; this is its essential nature. If we do but note its elements in the most careless manner, we shall find this to be the case. They are such, that no man can bring his soul under the power of them, and not experience this disenthralment and transfiguration of his being. Never did our Saviour mean that his joy should remain in his disciples in any other way, than by the words which he spake unto them, and would still speak, remaining in them. And this, indeed, is what he said: "if ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you." And this was to be the

office of the Holy Ghost, the Comforter, to "teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." We say again, this is the power of God's word, and this is the religion of experience; but it is *not* the power of God's word with a soul which is not kept under it. It *is* the power of God's word, when its living truths are believed and realized; and these truths are of such a nature, that it is not possible it should be otherwise.

I. Now, in dwelling upon some of the causes which have tended to make the piety of this age an imitative piety, rather than a piety of experience and originality; and therefore a self-indulgent, rather than a missionary piety; we shall begin with the mention of this great evil, namely, the want of a vivid, abiding perception of, and a meditative pondering upon, the individual truths of the Scriptures. It is not the habit of this age to *live* in and upon God's word; though at the same time this age knows more *about* the word of God, than any preceding age. Hence results inward weakness, even amidst great apparent knowledge. Hence, although the form may be perfect, the Spirit inhabits it not. Hence an inertness, like that which ensues on the breaking or partial interruption of a galvanic chain; a paralysis, like that of the limbs, when there happens a disconnection between the spine and the extremities. What we need is a new baptism from heaven in the faith which appreciates the power of divine truth, and sees and feels its reality. If we had this faith, we should be very different creatures. Any one of the great truths revealed in God's word, distinctly seen, and fully believed and appreciated, would change the whole character. It would possess the mind and enlist all the faculties. It would lift up the soul from the atmosphere of earth, to the atmosphere of heaven. Baptized into its power as a spiritual element, it would make us superior alike to the fear of man, and the allurements of the world; insensible to fatigue, and ready for

perpetual effort. It would be received into our spiritual existence, a powerful, practical life, and not a mere barren speculation.

A belief of the truth that hundreds of millions of our fellow-beings are, generation after generation, sinking into endless ruin; and that God has placed in our hands the means of their salvation; an appreciation of this truth, with a spiritual vividness and power at all like that which dwelt in the soul of the apostles, would quite arrest and enchain the mind beneath its influence, so that a man would act with so much exhaustless energy for the redemption of his fellow-beings that the world would well nigh deem him mad. And such madness would be true wisdom. Just so, a view of the glory of Christ, the holiness of God, the nature of sin, the shortness of time, the nearness of eternity, would in like manner govern and stamp the character, and make a man live like a superior being. These are the elements of faith, of prayer, of love, of solemnity, of power. And it is the blessed nature of these principles, their divine and indissoluble harmony and oneness, that a profound meditation upon any one, and a complete mastery of the mind by it, instead of disturbing the mind's balance, or diminishing its impression of the power and majesty of the others, does but set the soul in the centre, like an angel in the sun, and prepares it the better for the influence of the whole circle of divine truths. Men whose benevolence is confined to one thing, and who give to that an absorbing predominance, are sometimes designated as men of one idea. It were to be wished that the world were full of Christians with one idea. The cross of Christ is an idea. It is *the* idea which possessed and governed the lives of the Apostles. It is the idea that ought to rule the world. When an earthly idea masters the mind, to the exclusion of every other, it produces insanity. In regard to heavenly things, such madness is wise. Oh that we were all thus mad! When one of the elementary truths of the gospel thus mas-

ters the mind, it quite transfigures it with power and glory. It gives it the wings of a seraph, the freedom and swiftness of a celestial nature. It darkens this world ; but it is only because it lets in heaven upon the soul, and shows, along with the value of the soul, the true insignificance of this world and its vanities.

Now, it seems quite manifest that the ordinary measure of religion in this age fails to put the soul under this experience of the power of God's word, this burning, life-giving experience. We repeat it, that we need a new baptism from heaven, such personal, experimental knowledge of the irresistible energy and efficacy of divine truth, and such inward love and joy in its possession, as shall make us feel that this is the only weapon, the only instrumentality we need, for that it will work in the whole world as effectually as it does in ourselves. It would make a new Reformation, should there be such a baptism. In this view, we hail the appearance of such works as have come to us of late from among the mountains of Switzerland, the proper place for the birth and reverberation of such a voice, the voice as of a kingly spirit throned among the hills,—the work of Gausen, on the Inspiration of God's word, and that noble work of D'Aubigné, on the History of the Reformation. And sure we are, that if, in the spirit of reliance on God's word, and with the intensity of a living experience of its individual truths, we should go forth as Luther ; if the Christian church should do this, then would that system of Antichrist, which has lived by the hiding, corruption, ignorance and inexperience of God's word, die. The *spirit* of Romanism would die also, whatever shape of formalism it may inhabit. The new forms of Romanism would perish almost as soon as they should be born. The idolatry of forms could no more stand against the fire of the Spirit of God's Word, than the sere leaves and withered branches of the woods, in autumn, could stand before a forest conflagration.

It cannot be denied that we have been using the word of

God *rather as an external lamp, than an inward fountain*; and hence so much knowledge of duty, but so little love and performance. We were very much struck with this remark, in that book on inspiration, to which we have referred; for there is nothing more certain, than that other men's experience at second hand, in divine things, is lifeless. It is not what David Brainard or Jonathan Edwards felt, that can constitute my power, but what the Spirit of God teaches *me*, and makes *me* feel. Assuredly this is the grand reason why so much of the piety of this age is ineffectual. There are trees which remain standing in the midst of the forest, even after they are inwardly and completely rotten, solely by the strength and thickness of their bark; and just so a strong envelop of forms, with the "odor of sanctity" gathered from some great names, may keep the Christian and the church in the position of life, long after the spirit of life has almost utterly departed. But no Christian can live and be efficient by leaning on anything external for support.

To be powerful in religion, a Christian must be, in a most important sense, a self-made man; his acquisitions must be original; he can no more gird himself with the freshness and power of a living piety at second-hand, than a man could wield the miraculous energy of Paul or Peter, by looking at its exercise. He must have a personal baptism from God's word. Its living truths, in their simplicity and burning power, have been darkened by our speculations; and even in correct feeling we are deep in the empty channels of Christian experience worn by others, like men travelling in the dry bed of a mountain torrent, instead of being rapt onward, as in a burning chariot, on the path, in which, led and sustained by the Spirit of God, it might seem as if no being ever travelled before us.

And is the power of God's word never to be thus realized? Is there never an age coming, in which the glory

of Christ's religion shall be demonstrated? Shall this reproach never be lifted from the Scriptures, that they boast a power, which the world has never seen exerted? Is the earth coming into its millennium, and is this imperfect, crude, lamenting, uninviting, world-conforming piety, or this superstitious, domineering, intolerant piety of forms, to be all the realization of righteousness on earth? Are we willing, if we will be honest, to have the piety of a regenerated world moulded by the type of our piety? No! we will not believe that all the rapturous descriptions of the Bible are thus to end in smoke; we will not subscribe to the idea that such an imperfect Christianity is all that we can expect to spread, or to be spread through the world, or that we must be satisfied never to have a race, that shall rise to the stature of full-grown men in Christ Jesus. True it is, that the world has never yet seen such a race, or but for a little. True it is, that this glory lost its lustre in the obscurity of men's passions, very soon after the death of Christ and his apostles, and that generation after generation has gone by, and up to this time no race has fully risen to the apostolic standard. Nevertheless, we may remark that no age was ever more favorably placed for thus rising, than ours. It is one of the greatest glories of the missionary enterprise, that it promises to transfigure our piety, to save it from corruption, and to raise it to the image of the same mind which was in Christ Jesus. It may prove the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof, if God's people will but throw themselves into it.

II. The second cause which we shall urge for the imitative cast of the piety of this age, is the prevalence of low and indistinct views of Divine inspiration. These, so far as they prevail, are like a tetter in the blood, or a very *tabes dorsalis* for the corruption and weakening of the vitality of our piety. The Apostle commends those who receive the gospel as being indeed the very word of God, and not as the word of men. Now there are many who,

professing to receive it as a revelation from God, do nevertheless receive it as the word of men. The idea of the Rationalists and the Unitarians is indeed too prevalent, that for us it is not *the* revelation direct from God, but only the *record* of that revelation. Now we had almost said that we would as soon trust in the Koran, as in such a book. Our religion is built upon the sand, if its support be merely the human record of a divine revelation. We cannot take the word of God at second-hand, any more than, as Christians, we can adopt our piety from others' experience. It is, as we have already intimated, the blessedness of our religion, that in everything we are brought directly to God. And so, as in order to be powerful in religion the Christian must be perfectly original in his spiritual acquisitions, receiving them for himself directly from the Spirit of God, he must likewise feed upon the very words of God, and feel that he is doing so. It is no record of a revelation that can satisfy him, or energize his soul, but *the* revelation itself; it is no mere human description of the word of God by Isaiah or Paul, but the word of God itself, addressed to you and me as plainly, as definitely, as verbally, as to Isaiah or Paul. If a man abandons this ground, he abandons the citadel of his piety. He is no longer original, but imitative, and at second-hand in everything. In divine things, the very nerves of his soul will be cut in sunder; and though he may have a religion that will comport well with peaceable and idle times and ceremonies, yet in stormy times, in convulsions about faith, in conference with infidels, and in personal conflicts with Apollyon, he will find himself weak, irresolute, and defenceless, with neither fixed positions, nor the means of sustaining them.

It is one pestilent consequence of low views of inspiration, that philosophy, falsely so called, is let in to intermeddle with the Scriptures. A man who cannot stand upon the Bible, as in every part the very word of God, will not and cannot have that deep, abiding faith, which is superior

to the vicissitudes of merely human speculations. His bark will be driven about even in religious things, by the side winds of philosophy and science. He will be ready to submit a certain science to an uncertain; he will alter his views of divine revelation in accordance with the latest and most approved geological theory; and his views of divine doctrine will be modified by or dependent upon metaphysical reasonings. For a missionary piety, the most unqualified, unhesitating reliance on the word of God, is absolutely essential. In this the Reformers were greatly superior to us. They came out of a church which was all error, and they went direct to Christ and his truth, with a relish that made them drink deep into it. We hesitate not to say that their views of inspiration were higher than ours. They used the Scriptures inwardly; they took the medicine into the soul, to be healed by it, where we take it into the laboratory to analyze its ingredients, and test its purity. They laid it away in the heart; we put it into crucibles. Their characteristics were those of experience and wisdom; ours are those of knowledge and imitation.

It must be regarded as a special providence of God, that amidst all the despotism of Roman Catholic error, amidst all the concealment and ignorance of the Scriptures, the belief of mankind in their inspiration was preserved from being undermined by such a tide of Neology as hath since swept over the world, leaving the mud and spawn of infidelity so universal, that it will take time even to cleanse it from our most sacred things and recesses. Had that tide come before the birth of Luther, he would have had but very little power over men's minds, in appealing to the word of God. If the Papacy had added to all its other refuges of lies, not merely the withdrawal of the word of God from common perusal, but the denial of its infallibility, the instruction of the people in a rationalistic view of its inspiration, a thousand Luthers might have appealed to it in vain. And in our day, if men go forth to the work

of the world's conversion with low and loose views of the inspiration of the Scriptures, they will be shorn of their power. A man whose theory of a divine inspiration admits the possibility of error, the possibility that some passages may be less the word of God than others, and that some other passages may not be the word of God at all, has no firm ground to stand upon. "The prophet that hath a dream, let him tell a dream; but he that hath my word, let him speak my word faithfully. What has the chaff to do with the wheat? saith the Lord. Is not my word like as a fire, saith the Lord; and like a hammer, that breaketh the rock in pieces?"

III. The third cause, which we shall allege for the imitative state of our piety, is a practical relinquishment of the principle that the Bible is the only and sufficient rule of faith and practice. There is an evil of this nature in our age, double. There is one party in religion making the church a mediator between God's word and the soul. Instead of Christ's words, "I am the vine ye are the branches; abide in me, and let my words abide in you;" their language is, "The church is the vine; abide in the church, and let the words and ordinances of the church abide in you." This produces a religion of dependence on the church, and imitative on that side. It is imitation of the church, obedience to ceremony and tradition, the sacrifice of personal independence, not for the sake of principle but form; it is humility for the sake of pride, humility not in the shape of gentleness and love to those beneath us, but of the worship of power, authority, and grandeur above us. This is the humility which the forms of a monarchy tend to generate, humility upwards, not downwards; the minding of high things, not the condescending to men of low estate. This is the humility of Popery, and of that form of Popery, which exists as Puseyism or High Churchism. It is humility to all above, but pride and arrogance to all beneath. It is self-worship disguised, this professed

absorption into the church; it is self-enlarged, and expanded over a sect; "the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord, are we." It is arrogance and pride indulged, and erected into a virtue. This is one of the greatest triumphs of error and sin, when it can be enshrined into a form of duty.

On the other side it is not so bad, but the same imitative tendency prevails. Men, for a rule of practice, if not of faith, look not so much to God's word as to men. The garb of piety is worn, which is conformable to good usage. Christian society is the mirror, in which men dress and undress their souls for God. In this case it is the gregarious tendency of human nature, the same principle that leads a flock of sheep straight over a stone wall on one another's heels into green pastures. Unfortunately in this case it does not lead into green pasture, but away from it. Society, society, says Madame de Stael, how it makes the heart hard and the mind frivolous! how it leads us to live for what men will say of us! This is a great evil, this living for what men will say *of* us, instead of what God has said *for* us; but it is greater in the church than in the world. It is surprising how powerfully men will silently sustain one another in practical error, and almost paralyze their own consciences and the word of God in so doing. "Although," says Lord Bacon, "our persons live in the view of heaven, yet our spirits are included in the caves of our own complexions and customs, which minister unto us infinite errors and vain opinions, if they be not recalled to examination."

IV. A fourth cause which we shall mention, though perhaps more strictly it is part of the third, is the habit of deference to human authority, and the study of theology by systems and names, instead of the Scriptures. Hence an inquisitorial tendency, and the putting of books of human origin as standards of opinion. One man makes a Procrustes' bed out of Locke on the Human Understand-

ing; another out of Edwards on the Will. We think this would not be the case, if we lived more upon God's word. Nothing tends so much to produce a manly independence and a genuine gospel liberty of thought and feeling as a simple reliance upon God's word, and an unconditional submission to it. This habit of deference to human authority grew up in the pastures of Popery and Paganism. At one time men went mad with worship of Aristotle; then again of Plato; then of Duns Scotus and Thomas Aquinas; and neglect of God's word personally and individually, has permitted the church of Christ in every age to have her Aristotles and Platos, her Dunses, and Aquinases. We cannot but behold a proof of this tendency, this love of borrowed light, and this habitual reliance upon other things, rather than the word of God, even in our own republication of the admirable tomes of divinity and Christian experience in the seventeenth century. The movement, undoubtedly, is ominous of good, and not of evil; and it indicates the beginning of a better relish, as well as the poverty of our own stores. But we are also in danger, while pursuing the streams, of being led away from the fountain, and of omitting the same enthusiastic love and study of the word of God experimentally, which knit up into so great stature the giants of a past theological age. We are very, very far from undervaluing the labors of learned men, or the treasures of thought and experience digged out of the mines of God's word by their holy and enthusiastic industry. But we do say, that if we neglect the same labors, because great men of a past age entered into them, and because, therefore, we may do without them; if we take their treasures, and the treasures which they spread before their own age, to use, in our admiration, instead of digging those mines ourselves anew, for our own age, and for our own souls, then farewell to all originality and power; then will our religion continue to be a religion of imitation instead of experience. If this is to be the

result, it were better that every tome of divinity, and every record of Christian experience, were burned as soon as it should see the light. In this view we admire the nobleness of Luther, when the pope's bull of excommunication was published, and they began to burn the Reformer's books. "Let them destroy my works," said he; "I desire nothing better; for all I wanted was to lead Christians to the Bible, that they might afterwards throw away my writings. Great God! if we had but a right understanding of the Holy Scriptures, what need would there be of my books?" O how noble is this! How characteristic of a soul that had drunk deep for its own self into the Bible, and would have every other soul go and plunge into the same fountain of blessedness, and drink, and continue to drink, there and there only. We love Luther for this noble declaration. And sure we are that his works, fresh and powerful as they are, and the works of every other uninspired man, though you collect the whole circle of possible mental developments, between the genius of Baxter and that of Leighton, when compared with God's word, are but as winking tapers in the light of a noonday sun. And what should we think of the man who, if a set of gas-lights were hung up to burn in the streets at noonday, should go about endeavoring to walk by their light, or perpetually calling upon you to admire their glory, while he scarcely seems aware that the sun above him, like the very face of God, is shining with such splendor, as almost to put out those pale and ineffectual fires?

This being the case, on a comparison even of the richly spiritual divines of the seventeenth century with inspiration, how much more with reference to those writers called the Christian Fathers, comprehending so wide and chaotic a gathering of spoils and opinions in what Milton calls the drag-net of antiquity. It would be difficult to depict the ineffable absurdity of sending back the Christians of this generation into the twilight of Romish superstition and

philosophy, to interpret Scripture by tradition from the Fathers. Often as we see this attempted exaltation of the early doctors of the church into the place of supremacy over our own faith and opinion as founded on the Scriptures, we think of Taylor's powerful and beautiful delineation of the contrast between those doctors after the time of Christ, and the Jewish prophets before him. "It must be acknowledged that the writers of the ancient dispensation were such as those should be, who were looking onward towards the bright day of gospel splendor; while the early Christian doctors were just such as one might well expect to find those, who were looking onward toward that deep night of superstition, which covered Europe during the middle ages. The dawn is seen to be gleaming upon the foreheads of the one class of writers, while a sullen gloom overshadows the brows of the other."

If these remarks apply with any justice to books of practical divinity, much more do they to systems and books of theoretical speculation. For the student to let these prevent him from drinking in his theology originally and for himself at God's word, or to drink at these first, and form his taste there, and mould his opinions, and then, under the influence of that taste, and by the light of those opinions, to go to the Bible, and study it more or less under a cloud of prejudice, or if not under prejudice, at least in the attitude of a systematic theologian, rather than as a child, a learner, a former of his own system from divine truth by the Spirit of God, is to deprive his soul of the blessed elements of freshness and original power; it is to keep him from ever knowing the power of God's word; it is to make his religion the religion of imitation, and not that of experience.

We shall here strengthen our positions by some profound remarks of Lord Bacon. "As for perfection or completeness in divinity," says he, "it is not to be sought; which makes this course of artificial divinity the more suspect. For he that will reduce a knowledge into an art, will make

it round and uniform: but in divinity many things must be left abrupt, and concluded with this: O the depth of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how incomprehensible are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! So, again, the Apostle saith, *Ex parte scimus*: and to have the form of a total, when there is but matter for a part, cannot be without supplies by supposition and presumption. And therefore I conclude, that the true use of these terms and methods hath place in institutions or introductions preparatory unto knowledge; but in them, or by deducement from them, to handle the main body and substance of a knowledge, is in all sciences prejudicial, and in divinity dangerous." Lord Bacon likewise speaks of "the over early and peremptory reduction of knowledge into arts and methods; from which time commonly sciences receive small or no augmentation. But as young men, when they knit and shape perfectly, do seldom grow to a farther stature; so knowledge, while it is in aphorisms and observations, it is in growth; but when it once is comprehended in exact methods, it may, perchance, be farther polished and illustrated, and accommodated for use and practice; but it increaseth no more in bulk and substance."

The truth is, that no real advance can be made in theology, except by experience. It implies two things: knowledge of self, and knowledge of God; and in truth, as self can be known only by knowing God, all advance in theology, either man-ward or God-ward, depends upon divine grace. There is a passage in Zuingle's experience of great importance on this point. "Philosophy and theology," said he, "were constantly raising difficulties in my mind. At length I was brought to say we must leave these things, and endeavor to enter into God's thoughts in his own word. I applied myself in earnest prayer to the Lord, to give me his light; and though I read nothing but Scripture, its sense became clearer to me than if I had studied many commentators." "I study the doctors," said Zuingle,

“just as you ask a friend How do you understand this?” So, indeed, to neglect other writers, as if we could advance as well without them, would be pride and presumption; but there is a great difference in the mode of consulting them. A man, for example, on reading Edwards’s history of Redemption, cannot fail to make a great advance, by the aid of such comprehensive views, such a holy generalization of particulars, by a mind distinguished for this rare faculty. But this is not a book of systematic theology; and such a course of reading, and reading after and with a personal study of God’s word, is very different from the consultation of systems and systematic writers, who, in the very fact of striving after the completeness of their system, may prove unsuitable teachers. “By making authors dictators,” says Lord Bacon, “that their words should stand, and not consuls to give advice, the damage is infinite that sciences have received thereby, as the principle cause that hath kept them low, at a stay, without growth or advancement.”

There is all the difference between the study of theology in books, at second hand, and in the Bible with original experience, that there is between a man’s acquaintance with a romantic country, who goes straight through it in a rail-car, and his who travels as a pedestrian, over hill and valley, through city and hamlet, in meadows and by the river-side, calling at the peasant’s door, visiting many a sweet nook and shady fountain, breathing the morning freshness, enjoying the sunset and the twilight, drinking in, at every step of the way, all the blessed influences of the air and the sunshine, and watching all the lovely and changeful aspects of the face of nature. There are excellent rail-carriages to ride through the Bible; perhaps the human mind will never invent better ones than some that have been constructed. You may take passage in Calvin’s Institutes, or Turretin, or, if you please, in Ridgley’s body of divinity, or in Knapp, or in Storr and Flatt; and assur-

edly you cannot greatly err; but all this richness and blessedness of personal experience, and all the triumph and delight of individual discovery, and all the romance, novelty and freshness of pedestrian excursions, and all the power, variety, and certainty of original knowledge, you must utterly forego.

There is a stream artificially walled up in the valley of Saratoga, into which the healthful mineral waters of the various springs pour themselves off together, after welling up independently at the fountain head. Now, suppose the visitors at Saratoga, in search of health, should go to that running stream, and prefer the taste of it, telling you in what a perfect unity, in what a comprehensive, system, they receive the waters, by thus drinking of them; and suppose that men should thus test their remedial excellence in their own complaints, and should profess to analyze the elemental fountains by the study of that stream, visiting the original sources now and then, but dwelling ordinarily at the brook, and drinking of it habitually; these men would not unaptly represent the folly of a man, who should study the word of God, and form his opinions of its fundamental truths, principally by the streams of theology that have sprung from it, by human systems and institutes.

Even if the church universal could build a perfect conduit, still would we never give up the right of private judgment, nor the duty of each student of the Scriptures to form his theology originally for himself. Let him go to the deep well-springs, the separate individual fountains in the Old and New Testaments, and let him drink their sparkling contents fresh and pure in the clearness of their original and individual dialects. Let him do this to form his own theology, or rather to make the theology of the Scriptures possess and imbue his soul. Let him do this to fill full and keep ever overflowing the fountain of his own experience, joyous and rich, strong and abundant. Let him do this, striving all the while mightily in prayer for

that baptism of the Spirit, which alone can make the truths of Scripture his own powerful, original, life-giving experience. This process makes a true, independent, biblical theologian; entire dependence on the word and Spirit of God, entire independence of human systems as authorities. If we are not greatly mistaken, this course is taught and commanded in the Scriptures; and if the history of individual minds be not utterly erroneous, this course clothes the soul with power; it makes the Christian a king and a priest unto God. It does this, just in proportion as he refuses every mediator between his own soul and the word of God; just in proportion as he receives in simplicity the engrafted word, which is able to save his soul; just in proportion as he lives upon it, and in his own spiritual conflicts, in prayer and in profound meditation, and by the baptism of the Holy Spirit, makes its experience his own experience. This is power, wisdom, blessedness, glory. This comprehends all the elements of a missionary piety. "I had rather follow the shadow of Christ," said the noble Reformer and Martyr, Bishop Hooper, "than the body of all the general councils or doctors since the death of Christ. It is mine opinion unto all the world, that the Scripture solely, and the Apostles' church is to be followed, and no man's authority, be he Augustine, Tertullian, or even Cherubim or Seraphim."

V. A fifth cause for the imitative cast of piety in this age, we take to be the prevalence of a philosophical system unfavorable to religious faith. Whatever throws the mind in upon itself, and the soul upon God, begets originality and power; whatever throws it upon external supports and mediums of proof, weakens it. There are two principal things in philosophy—intuition and experience; the first may be compared to a compass, the second to a chart. You may sail your ship a great way by the first, and yet throw her on the rocks, if you strive to make a harbor without the last. On the other hand, without the compass,

the chart would be of little use to you ; for you might have a correct chart of the coast of Europe, and yet, without the compass, sail for years in a circle on the Atlantic, endeavoring to find Europe. So it is with intuition and experience ; if the denial of the last leaves you with nothing but *terra incognita*, the denial of the first leaves you without *terra firma*. A philosophy that denies the first, is like a fog in the atmosphere ; if you sail upon the ocean of truth in such a fog, you must either do it by the lead and line, till you might almost, from disuse, deny the existence of the compass, or, if you dash onward, you are as likely to strike a reef of rocks, as to get into the harbor.

The prevalence of a philosophy that throws men upon external things, united with the experimental and physical spirit of this age, has tended to withdraw men's minds from the sublime and simple verities of God's word. An experimental tendency in one direction is infidelity ; in another it is faith. Confined to second causes, it is infidelity ; but if men would put experience as the standard in divine things, as they do in human, it would be well. All true religion is experimental. Hence the *course* of infidelity is the most unphilosophical in the world, while to some extent its *principle* is perfectly wise and philosophical. It refuses to believe, except on experience ; very well : but it refuses to try the experiment, nay, it would, if possible, destroy the experiment. A Brahmin was once persuaded by an Englishman to look through a microscope at a vegetable, which constituted a favorite part of his diet. To the horror of the meat-abjuring Indian, he beheld whole herds of animals quietly browsing in their pastures, which he had been accustomed to eat at a mouthful. He seized the instrument, in his anger, trod on it, and crushed it to pieces. So the world are very ready to do with demonstrations that they do not like, or that oppose their favorite systems, or show their sins. Infidelity and the Roman Catholic religion

would destroy, or keep out of sight, the heavenly instrument that exposes their own iniquity and error.

This empirical spirit in divine things, exercised in dogmatism, but stopping short of faith, makes an age proud and critical, rather than humble and believing. There is a great difference between an age of belief and an age of criticism ; all the difference that there is between creative power and the power of judgment. An age of belief will be employed in creative operations, leaving the lower work of criticism to be performed by those who come after. An age of criticism is an age of doubt, and therefore of weakness, not of inborn power. It is an age of the preparation of rules, not of principles in action, in vivifying operation ; and so it is an age of the understanding of rules, not the *consciousness* of principles. Perhaps principles will even be denied, and the rules of empiricism alone adopted. Just as if in medicine there should be an age of physicians formed in the apothecary's shop, by the study of formulas, symptoms and cases, instead of the powers of nature, the laws of the human constitution, and the principles of things. It is not to be denied that such a set of men might go very far, might come to great perfection, in the knowledge and classification of symptoms, cases and cures ; it would be an age of great proficiency in diagnosis ; but do we not see that just in proportion to the perfection of such knowledge, if we stop there, we are at the greater distance from wisdom and power, from the seeds of things, and the elements of universality ? As in general an age of systems stops the discovery of new truth, so an age of criticism stops the search for it. Homer and Thucydides mark a creative age ; Quintilian and Longinus, a critical one ; this is imitative, artificial, that is original and spontaneous.

In regard to the general subject of metaphysics, in connection with divinity, it is almost an undeniable truth, that in every age the predominant metaphysical opinions, the speculative philosophy in general acceptance, will influence

the theology, and so, in an incalculable degree, the piety of that age. The history of the church shows this, and sometimes in a most melancholy demonstration. The possibility of articles of faith, their compatibility with the laws of reason, is to be determined on metaphysical principles. The question whether they are agreeable to reason, or contrary to it, or simply undiscoverable by it, will be determined according to a man's metaphysics. Now, if that science be one that in its first principles rejects the possibility of intuitions of spiritual truths, the communion of the mind, through reason, with principles that could not be made known to it through the senses, then the consequence must be a denial of all mysterious truths in religion, of all truths that are above the reach of the unaided human understanding. "In each article of faith embraced on conviction, the mind determines, first, intuitively on its logical possibility; secondly, discursively on its analogy to doctrines already believed, as well as on its correspondences to the wants and faculties of our nature; and, thirdly, historically on the direct and indirect evidences." Now, it is manifest that, if on metaphysical principles the first determination of the mind, in respect to any such article of faith, be, that it is a logical impossibility, all its historical evidence, and all its alleged correspondency to our wants, and analogy to other doctrines, will go for nothing. "The question," says Mr. Coleridge, "whether an assertion be in itself inconceivable, or only by us unimaginable, will be decided by each individual, according to the positions assumed as first principles in the metaphysical system which he had previously adopted. Thus the existence of the Supreme Reason, the creator of the material universe, involved a contradiction for a disciple of Epicurus; while, on the contrary, to a Platonist the position is necessarily presupposed in every other truth, as that without which every fact of experience would involve a contradiction in reason."

Just so a Unitarian denies the doctrine of the Trinity, as

a metaphysical impossibility, setting a metaphysical lie above the verity of the Scriptures ; and, in general, a great cause of weakness and of lying doctrine in this age, is the marching of metaphysical speculations into regions where they do not belong. It is true that our philosophy, even where it is correct, is very short-sighted, and that in most cases, as the Indians say of the world that it rests first upon a mountain, then upon an elephant, and so on till they come to a tortoise, where they stop ; so it is with us in attempting to explain the mysteries of our being ; our philosophy generally ends with the tortoise. It is true, also, that the multitude, even of educated minds, receive metaphysical principles upon trust, without the least analysis of their nature, and with no perception of the extensive reach of their influence ; and in such cases, with the believer in God's word, where the received metaphysics are false, there is a happy and ignorant inconsistency between the false metaphysics and the spiritual faith. But still it is impossible that a false system of metaphysics should prevail, without exerting a powerful deteriorating influence over every province of mind and morals. The student and the Christian may never at any one moment be conscious of that influence, for that would be to see the falsehood of the system ; but the influence is felt, and is the more powerful for being imperceptible, unsuspected, and, therefore, unresisted. It is an element of deterioration in the presence of every spiritual truth, depriving it of half its power ; an influence that insensibly stupefies the mind itself, and dwarfs all its productions. You may not notice it while within its circle ; but just remove into another atmosphere, and you will see what you have been suffering and what you have been losing. It is like being shut up for hours in a close, ill-ventilated, and crowded lecture-room ; the air becomes very impure, but you, being accustomed to it, hardly notice the impurity, nor the deleterious influence over your system, till you go out into the fresh atmosphere ; and then if you should again re-

turn into the room, where so many lungs have been respiring till the vital properties of the air have been almost exhausted, you could not endure it. So it is with the injurious influence which a prevailing false system of metaphysics will inevitably exert over the student's mind. The sublimities of the gospel itself will be deprived of half their grandeur, and in that unwholesome vapor, everything will be pallid, meagre, lifeless, and cold. The clouds raised around the truths of the gospel through the medium of grovelling metaphysical speculations are not, as in the natural atmosphere, converted into glorious shapes, reflecting the sun's glory. They darken the truth, and it looks through them, shorn of its beams. The power of self-evidence that belongs to the things of religion is taken away, and the truth, instead of commanding assent in all the absolute majesty of the Supreme Reason, timidly and doubtfully entertains admittance to the heart. It cannot be otherwise, if the truths of theology grow up into a metaphysical system that in its first principles, if logically pressed, denies their possibility. The denial may not be open, may not be observed, but the deteriorating influence will certainly be exerted. And so sure as there is discernment enough to see that influence, combined with a sceptical disposition, the scepticism in the heart will take refuge in the metaphysics of the understanding, and there manufacture and thence send forth its attacks against the elements of spiritual faith. Thus it is that infidel speculations, grounded on false metaphysical premises, and concocted in the closet by speculative men, have found their way to the hearts of a common multitude, who know nothing about metaphysics, good or bad, except the name, but take the scepticism as the perfection of reason and common sense.

Now, we say that anything which weakens the power of self-evidence in the gospel must inevitably exert a disastrous influence over our piety; and if there have been such an ingredient in the prevalent philosophy of this age,

this is one cause for our want of originality and experience.

VI. A sixth cause why the piety of this age is weak and imitative, is to be found in the neglect and ignorance of the doctrine of justification by faith. We do not know of a single evangelical doctrine that has suffered such sad oversight. Perhaps one reason may be, that we have been occupied with controversies for other truths, and with enemies in other parts of the citadel, so frequently as to forget this danger; but whatever be the cause, we have well-nigh forgotten the doctrine, and to depart from it is to exhaust the very fountain of strength in our spiritual being. The life of the doctrine of the blessed reformers, and the light of their existence, was their experimental knowledge of this truth, which we know so partially. We have looked upon it too much as a negative speculation; they regarded it as a positive life; we study it, they possessed it; we acknowledge it, and put it in our creeds; they lived by it, and died for it. The consequence is, that it energizes all their productions; from this cause alone their spirit and style are as different from the inert prettinesses of this age, as the transfiguration by Raphael from a modern lithographic engraving of the same, or as a great Gothic Cathedral from a gingerbread wooden imitation. We know not what we lose, nor how far we die, when we lose the spirit of this doctrine. The church is devoted to destruction, if this grace goes out of the temple; and we may almost hear our guardian angels mournfully whispering, Let us depart hence. As the atonement is the central doctrine of the Gospel, so an experimental knowledge of justification by faith is the central grace in the heart of the Christian and the church. If it be out of place, all other graces will hang loosely; if it be deficient, all other graces will wither and waste as by a slow poison. In the piety of this age it is deficient; it is out of place, pushed from its office; in some quarters it is disowned, and well-nigh annihilated;

everywhere there is great ignorance and inexperience of it; and the consequence is, that on the one hand sanctification is exalted into a Saviour, and on the other, formalists and priests and admirers of gilded crosses, despising sanctification and justification almost alike, are busily vamping up the trumpery of Popery in its stead. Instead of this reigning and radiant truth presented and developed, they chant to us the *Io Pæan* of a baptismal regeneration, with candles at noonday, and fish on Friday; they sing to us delicately about the sacred beauty of the observance of sacred days, and sacred rites and ordinances. With what energy would Paul have rebuked this spirit! What? he would say, hath Christ, at such expense of blood, set you free from the destruction of the Man of Sin; and will ye again pass under the accursed yoke? Will ye enter your prison-house of will-worship, to grind in its filthy dungeons? How, turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in bondage? Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years. I am afraid of you. Behold I, Paul, say unto you, that if ye be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing: ye are fallen from grace.

But it is not those alone, who would worship the cross instead of the crucified Saviour, the altar instead of the altar's God, that have abjured this doctrine, or betrayed it into the hands of its enemies; it is we all, just in proportion to our neglect and inexperience of its life-giving power. And this inexperience is great; and every man who has anything to do with the admission of candidates to the church of Christ, will have to deplore that this inexperience of this life-giving truth has become almost the type of piety in our new converts, so that you may perhaps find a greater ignorance of this than of any other doctrine in the Scriptures. But is this the preparation which is needed in a missionary age, which should characterize the piety of an age that hopes to accomplish the world's regeneration? We need a new baptism in the fire of individual

scriptural truth, but more than all, in the fire of this truth of justification by faith. Doubtless, there is a power in his doctrine, which will annihilate every form of Romanism; but it must be felt, in order to be used. Was it exhausted at the Reformation, when we saw it flash so gloriously? Why does it not flash with equal glory now, when its power is equally needed? It did but half its work, it disclosed but half its energy. Perhaps one great reason why, under God, such a resurrection of refined and gilded formalism is now permitted, and such an exaltation of THE CHURCH, in the place of CHRIST, is to call all true Christians, by the very emergency, back to the rock and refuge of this doctrine. It is to make *Christ's-men* instead of *Church-men*. And sure we are, that if Luther were now on earth to publish again this element of his power, with the freshness of his burning experience, to pour it from the depths of his full heart as from a church organ, accustomed as we are to think that we know all about it, it would stir Christendom now with almost as much enthusiasm, and with almost as great a convulsion, as it did then.

When we look at the discipline through which Luther and some other men passed, in their baptism with the fire of this doctrine, it seems that we do but dream about it, that we know nothing of it, that we are like men walking and talking in our sleep—a race of religious somnambulists. Indeed, without this burning experience, what are we doing, where is our efficiency? We are no better than petrified monks, and might almost as well be thrown back into past darkness, and with St. Anthony be employed in preaching to the fishes of the Atlantic. We might as well be hooded and cowed and shrouded in the cells of some old monastery, employed in doing penance, wearing sack-cloth shirts, telling our beads, and ascending Pilate's staircase. The indomitable Luther himself once set out to do this upon his knees; and it was a great crisis of his being;

for he had got about half way up, when there came a voice of thunder into his soul, **THE JUST SHALL LIVE BY FAITH!** and it scared him effectually and forever from his penance. There are numbers in our day who are ascending Pilate's staircase; some in forms and ceremonies, and apostolical successions, and hatred of conventicles, and kneelings to bishops, and Christless worship of the church, and contempt and persecution of all beyond their narrow sect, and open and avowed hatred of justification by faith; and others in the forgetfulness, disregard, and inexperience of this blessed doctrine. Would to God that such a voice from heaven might enter into every man's soul; but even if it did, it would do no good, without something of Luther's deep spiritual experience, gathered in conflict and prayer.

We need it; we all need it; it is the want of this that forms the characteristic palsy of the piety of this age. With this living experience of Christ's truth, and so many Christians in motion under it, no false form of religion could stand before the church for a moment. We need it as ministers of the gospel, in our common, ordinary preaching. We need it to have any power whatever in the conversion of men. We need it, to have our new converts baptized into it, instead of the spirit of indolence and worldly conformity. We need it, in order to preach from feeling instead of imitation. We need it, to break up the reign of custom, and to let in upon the soul the unwonted freshness of a first love.

May God in mercy baptize every one of us with this spirit. May the church possess it. May the spirit and power of **JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH** take hold upon us! Then will the final conflict of the Gospel against Romanism, against Formalism, be a short conflict indeed; but a more glorious triumph of God's word and Spirit than the world has ever witnessed.

A point growing out of this last named cause for the

want of experimental originality in the piety of this age, is the imagined discovery of a royal road to heaven. We are very desirous of believing that we can live at ease, and yet gain that experience which other men gathered only by conflict and prayer. We should like to possess the powerful experience of faith which Luther possessed, and which in general characterized the age of the Reformers ; but we are not willing to undergo that intense, soul-trying, spiritual discipline, which he had to pass through in gaining it. It is the mistake of this age to make of religion a thing of comfort and ease, instead of self-mortification and labor. We forget that in its very essence, religion is a thing of discipline, self-mortifying discipline, and that the principle of vicarious suffering is the one by which the world is to be converted to Christ, just as certainly as it is that in which was laid the very foundations of the world's redemption. Hence the Church that draws back from the baptism of suffering, is not the church that can be instrumental in this world's regeneration ; and if the church in our age be doing this, if self-indulgence be the mark of our piety, it is as clear as noonday that not to us has the glorious commission been vouchsafed of accomplishing the promises of God, and not to us will the glory ever be granted of ushering in this consummation. It was the beautiful language of the poet Cowper, wrung from him by his own experience of anguish,

The path of sorrow, and that path alone,
Leads to the land where sorrow is unknown.

We believe that this must not only be the experience of every individual Christian in getting to heaven, but that the church by which the world's regeneration shall be accomplished, will be a church baptized with suffering, or what will answer the same purpose, distinguished for voluntary self-denial. If we reject this, it is no wonder that our piety is destitute of originality and vital power ; we

are rejecting that which, in a world of fallen beings, constitutes, in the very nature of things, the only source of power. Death, said Mr. Coleridge, only supplies the oil for the inextinguishable lamp of life. This great truth is true even before our mortal dissolution ; that death to self which trial produces, constituting, even in this world, the very essence of strength, life, and glory.

Some men think that heaven is growing up on earth, a gradual amelioration and melting of earth into heaven, so that by and by half the Bible will get obsolete, because self-denial and affliction will no longer be the custom of our pilgrimage. The truth is, there never could be such a state of external things, as that fallen beings *could* be purified and refined without burning and filing. If we carry not heaven within us, external peace and beauty will never produce it ; and heaven within us is to be wrought in the midst of our corruption only by trial and suffering ; and even then, without continued discipline, the very piety of the church would cream and mantle like a stagnant pool.

We are aware that the analysis of causes which we have attempted is exceedingly imperfect, and certainly it might be pursued much farther with interest and profit. One or two conclusions, from our investigation, are of sufficient importance to lay up for consideration, if not to dwell upon now. And first, it is very evident that a missionary spirit is the only safe-guard and guarantee of a sound theology. If any church or any body of men undertake to keep their spiritual privileges to themselves, to arrogate an exclusive possession of them, or to release themselves from the claims of Christian stewardship and self-denial for others, they will find them putrefying and rotting on their hands, with a brood of vipers generated in the midst of them, a thousandfold worse than the stinking worms which the Israelites found in their hoarded manna. The very coriander-seed of heaven will not keep from corruption, if men keep it to themselves. Our religion and our theology would be

a Dead Sea, in which the fish would die, and nothing but the slime and pitch of metaphysics, and erroneous and bewildering speculations, would float upon the surface, if the rippling waters of a missionary piety did not flow through it. The epistles of the Apostles themselves would have been full of thorns and weeds and poisons, if their piety had not been of such a nature as to provide that the *Acts* of the Apostles should precede and accompany the *Letters*. The acrid humors and imposthumes of monastic superstitions would have broken out ages before they did, and the first Pope would have been elected not at Rome, but at Jerusalem.

And we may add, as another conclusion, that a missionary spirit, as it is necessary to preserve the church from the despotism of error and of dogmatism, so it is the foundation of individual originality and power. Not even the word of God, nor the study of the word of God, will keep men from error, if the heart be not full of love, and thirsting after God's knowledge. The truths of the gospel are not to be discovered but by moral discipline, by a hard following of the soul after God; at any rate, not so to be discovered as to become the elements of power. No man could be a painter by seeing Raphael put on his colors; no man could be a musician by seeing Apollo himself play upon his pipe; no man could be a chemist by reading Sir Humphrey Davy's dissertations; and no man can be a theologian by the mere study of the Scriptures. He has not only to labor with the understanding, but to labor with the heart, in prayer. It is the want of this latter labor, that makes the piety of this age imitative and external. It produces individual darkness and weakness, even in the midst of learning. Most admirably doth Lord Bacon remark that "it was most aptly said by one of Plato's school, 'that the sense of man carrieth a resemblance with the sun, which, as we see, openeth and revealeth all the terrestrial globe, but then again it obscureth and concealeth the

stars and celestial globe : so doth the sense discover natural things, but it darkeneth and shutteth up divine.' 'And hence it is true that it hath proceeded that divers learned men have been heretical, whilst they have sought to fly up to the secrets of the Deity, by the waxen wings of the senses.' " 'The truth is, it is only in God's light, that we can see the light. Who has not known this in his own experience ? But God's light never comes without love ; and there is a light of the understanding merely, which utterly fails to convince. Lord Bacon commends the *lumen siccum* of Heraclitus, as preferable to that *lumen madidum* or *maceratum*, which is "steeped and infused in the humors of the affections ;" and this, with great truth, applied to men's personal passions and cares. But in reference to God, there is a *lumen siccum*, a dry light, in which the mind dies for want of moisture ; the fervor of the affections constituting the only medium of salutary communication with certain truths, of believing communion with them. If this be absent, and yet the soul be carried into the atmosphere of such truths, it is quite intolerable. It is the business of devils ; and Milton has well set the wandering spirits of hell, in their sadness and pain, to metaphysical reasoning upon themes that can no more be handled without pain by a heart not at peace with God, than a man could take coals of fire in his hand and not be burned. The highest atmosphere of thought, to apply a physical image from this great poet, "burns froze, and cold performs the effect of heat," unless it be a region irradiated by the love of God. There is the same result to the soul, which Humboldt experienced in the body, when ascending into a mountain air so thin and rarefied that the lungs labored spasmodically, and the blood almost started from the pores.

To the same purpose, Lord Bacon again says, that "the quality of knowledge, if it be taken without the corrective thereof, hath in it some nature of venom or malignity, and some *effects* of that venom, which is ventosity or swelling.

The corrective spice," he adds, "the mixture whereof maketh knowledge so sovereign, is CHARITY, as saith the Apostle." In speaking of certain writings, which acted in no slight degree to prevent his mind from being imprisoned within the outlines of any single dogmatic system, Mr. Coleridge presents a similar idea, with a vividness which is truly startling. "They contributed," says he, "to keep alive the *heart* in the *head*; gave me an indistinct, yet stirring and working presentiment, that all the products of the mere *reflective* faculty partook of DEATH, and were as the rattling twigs and sprays in winter, into which a sap was yet to be propelled from some root to which I had not yet penetrated, if they were to afford my soul either food or shelter."

That root, we believe, was CHRIST. And now let me add that there are some truths, of essential importance to the world's becoming better, of which we venture to say, no man can have such a belief as to constitute any power in the use of them, without much acquaintance with God in Christ. Take for example, the very universally acknowledged truth of the eternal damnation of wicked souls. There is no man that can believe this truth, especially as applied to the heathen, with anything more than the belief of assent and of custom, with the unassailable belief of power, without seeing and feeling the holiness of God; and the holiness of God is not to be seen and felt, without a close walk with God. Not one of God's attributes is to be known without *heart-labor*, and yet it is in the knowledge of God's attributes, that all sound theology consists. And this truth, of which we have spoken, is at the very foundation of the whole missionary enterprise.

I wish now to beg your attention to one more conclusion, which, as those who hear me are young men, and as we are parts of a young nation, cannot but sink down deep into our minds, and I would hope may happily influence our own self-discipline. It is, that in the life of individ-

uals and of nations, the provision of the materials of originality, experience, and power in the character, is confined for the most part to a particular and an early period.

“The CHILD is father of the MAN.”

Our great modern poet has put this great truth into a child's ballad, but it is for men to reflect upon. In the development whether of individuals or of nations it is true. The early studies of genius are wrought into the mind like beautiful pictures traced in sympathetic ink, and they afterwards come out into view in the influence they exert in all the mind's productions. The first studies of Rembrandt affected his after labors; that peculiarity of shadow, which marks all his pictures, originated in the circumstance of his father's mill receiving light from an aperture at the top, which habituated that artist afterwards to view all objects as if seen in that magical light. What is thus true in the course of individuals, is as true, on a vast scale, in the development of the literature and character of nations.

Now our practice of the science of self-culture and self-discipline is to too great a degree extemporaneous and late; nor do we sufficiently avail ourselves of others' experience. It is certainly important to discover what has been the nourishment of other minds, and then to apply your knowledge. It is not certain that the same discipline, through which Burke or Coleridge passed, would be as good for other minds as for theirs; but there must have been some qualities in their mental culture, some processes in their growth and development, which, discovered and applied by us, would be useful. For example, if Mr. Coleridge tells us that in early life he found in certain rare and neglected volumes, some trains of thought that set him powerfully to thinking, you may be quite sure that the same excitement would be favorable to a susceptible and growing mind now. But it may happen that the seed which will grow in one

patch of ground will not in another. You may raise a good crop of potatoes where you cannot raise wheat, and the soil that will bear a wheat crop one year, will do better laid out in corn and melons the next. Now nature seems to require somewhat the same alterations in the cultivation of mind; at any rate there is no monotony. An age of great classical erudition may be succeeded by an age of deep philosophy, or these both by an age of physical science and railroads; and you may not be able, without difficulty, to trace the laws or causes of this change. If you cut down a forest of pines, there will spring up in its place a growth of the oak or the maple. So in the world's mind there are the germs of many developments, to which external accidents may give birth, some in one age, some in another. There is a singular analogy between the goings on of life in the natural and in the moral world, and nature many times suggests lessons which she does not directly teach. Nature is suggestive in her teachings; and so is the word of God; and so is everything that in its teachings at the same time awakens and disciplines the mind.

But there is a period, after which even suggestive teachings and suggestive books lose their power. There is a germinating period, a period in which a good book goes down into the soul, as a precious seed into a moist furrow of earth in the spring, and germinates; a new growth springs from it. It is different from knowledge; it becomes the mind's own, and is reproduced in a form of originality; its principles become seeds in a man's being, and by and by blossom and fructify. This, I say, is a particular period, and it does not last. A man who has passed it may read the same book and *know* it perfectly; the acquisition of knowledge goes on through life; but knowledge as life, knowledge as the creator of wisdom, not so. It is all the difference between an oak set out, and one that grows from the acorn. I have in my mind some volumes which have

exerted a refreshing and inspiring power over many young minds, but with older ones the power does not seem to exist; it is like putting a magnet to a lump of clay. Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; and so, except a good book fall into the soul and die, it abideth alone; and the time in which a good book thus dies in the soul, is particular and analogous to the spring tide of the seasons. An ear of corn may fall into the ground and die in midsummer; but it will not be reproduced; and just so with books and principles in men's mind: if the sowing of them be deferred till the midsummer or autumn of the soul, though they may enrich the soil, they will not produce a harvest; there may be the green blade, but the full corn in the ear you will never see.

So also it is with the seeds and habits of our piety; our character and attainments, not only in this world, but in eternity, will be the fruits of the germination of divine things in our souls now.

Let me pray you, therefore, to take care of the germinating period of your being; for when you have passed through it, though you may have the same books to read, and the same means of study, they will not affect you as they once would. There is a tide in the deep souls of men, as well as in their affairs, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; and if you omit it, the loss and the misery will be yours. Suffer me now to leave your minds beneath the influence of one more aphorism from the wisdom of Lord Bacon. "For if you will have a tree bear more fruit than it hath used to do, it is not anything you can do to the boughs, but it is the stirring of the earth, and putting new mould about the roots, that must work it." And if we might add one recipe as to the sort of mould you would do well to apply, we would say, take the study of Butler's Analogy, South's Sermons, (avoiding his hatred of the Puritans,) Bacon's Advancement of Learning, Burke's Character and Works, John Foster's Essays, and (bating

his erroneous views of the atonement) Coleridge's *Friend*, and *Aids to Reflection*. This is but a single formula; you well know the catalogue might be greatly varied and enlarged; and different men will put down different authors, according to their own idiosyncracies. But we speak now of suggestive works; and the Latin proverb is worth remembering, Beware of the man of one book.

THE END.

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